

MOTOR WAYS IN
LAKELAND

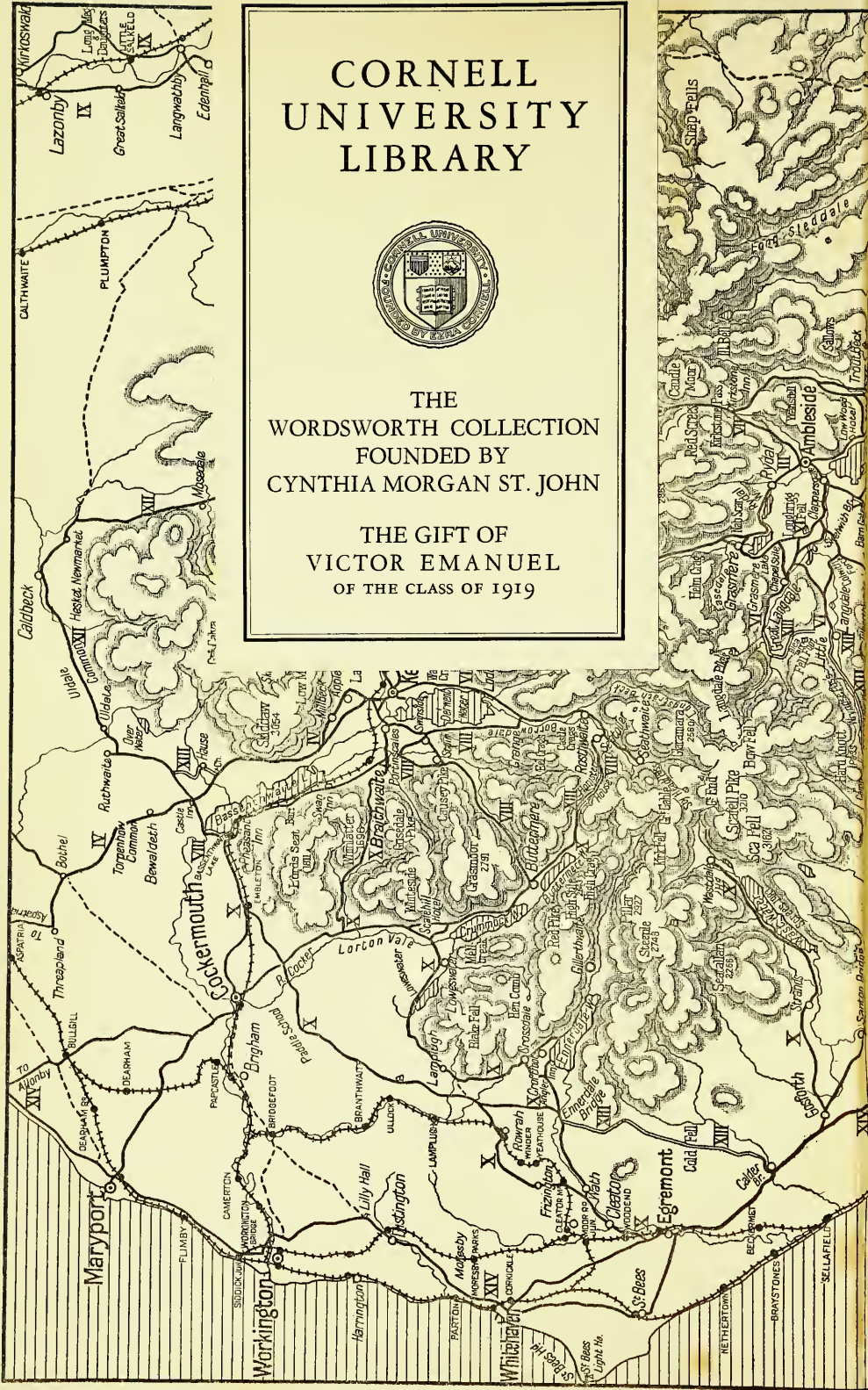
GEORGE D. ABRAHAM

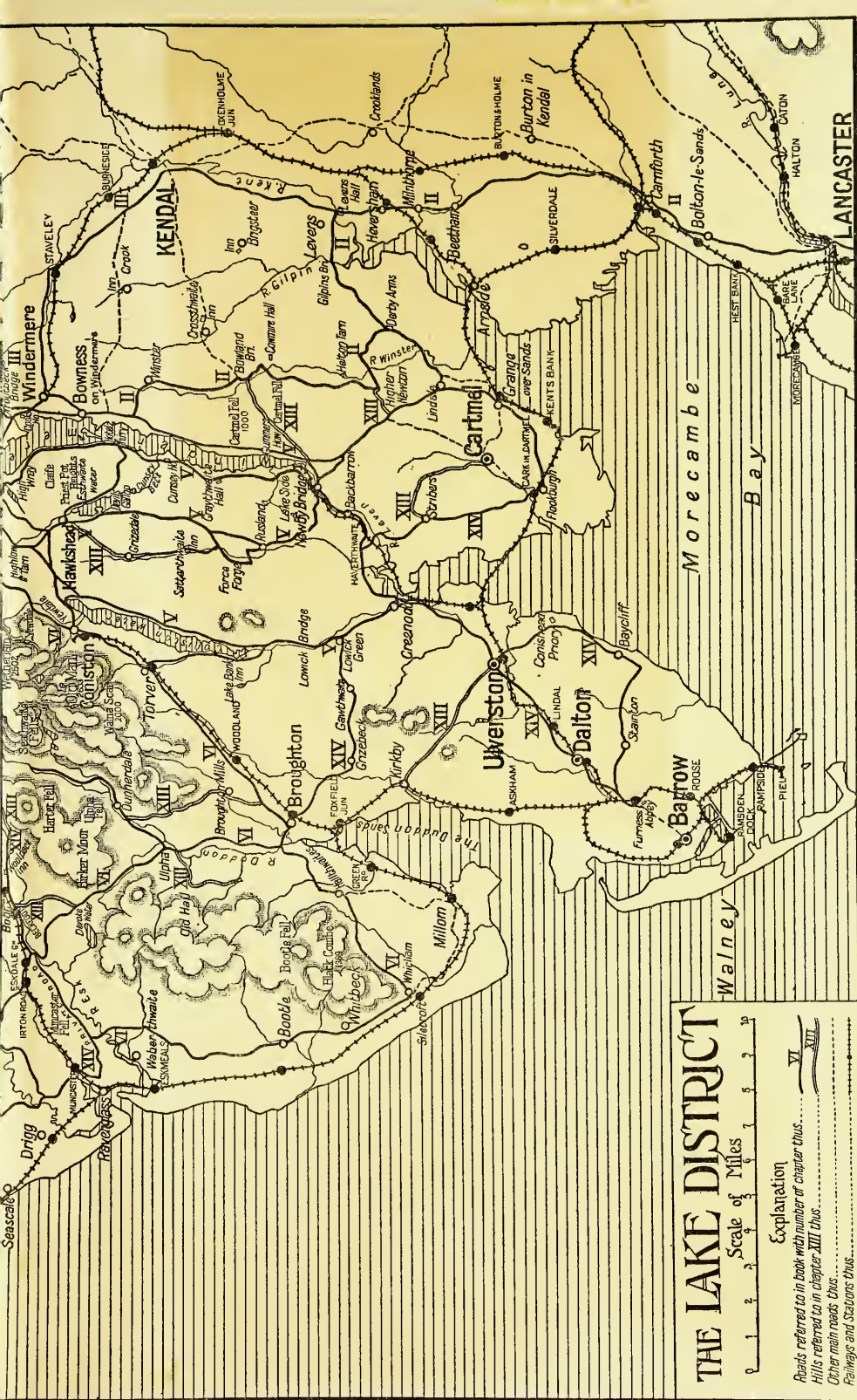
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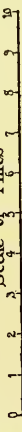
THE GIFT OF
VICTOR EMANUEL
OF THE CLASS OF 1919





THE LAKE DISTRICT

Scale of Miles



Explanation

- Roads referred to in book with number of chapter thus. VII
- Hills referred to in chapter XIII thus. XIII
- Other main roads thus.
- Railways and Stations thus.

Wordsworth

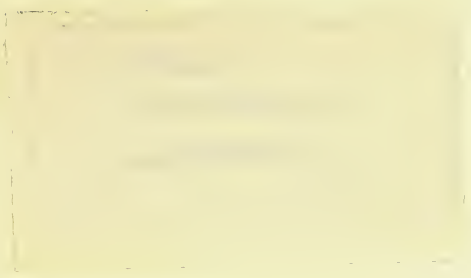
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MOTOR WAYS IN LAKELAND



IN THE HEART OF BORROWDALE

MOTOR WAYS IN LAKELAND

BY

GEORGE D. ABRAHAM

AUTHOR OF "THE COMPLETE MOUNTAINEER"
"MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES AT HOME AND ABROAD"

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP

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PREFACE

A LIFELONG knowledge of the Lake Country, and practical experience of its motor ways since the very earliest days of De Dion and Benz, have tempted the author to persuade others to follow in his wheel tracks.

The old popular conception, or misconception, of the motorist is gradually dying out. He is no longer a slayer of all that lives on the highway, a spoiler of all things bright and beautiful, a speed-fiend with dust and smell in his wake. Yet now and again, even in Lakeland, such a one may be encountered intent on robbing the sport and pastime of its tardily acquired good repute. For such the lakes and mountains, with sinuous roads attendant, have little appeal, but the author recognizes that the vastly larger mass of motorists is really interested in the manifold attractions and charms of a district which, for its natural beauty, is unsurpassed in the whole world. Thus he would attempt to induce others to see something more than Windermere and Derwentwater when they come to Lakeland. Every lake and every

valley is worthy of exploration, and the roads are remarkably good, though sometimes there is a spice of adventure in their conquest, which to many is an additional attraction.

As a practical help to fellow-motorists regarding the difficulties of the less known roads and hills, the author would say that a standard 10 h.p. four-seated Alldays car has, with a few exceptions, taken him over all the routes and gradients described, many of them hitherto unvisited by the motor-car. The exceptions are the ascent of Honister Pass from Buttermere, that of Wrynose from Fell Foot, and Blea Tarn Hill from Langdale. Others have shown that these are possible.

A special feature has been made of the hills and their gradients, for to many, especially those with light cars and also to motor cyclists, they are a fascinating and sporting feature of the district. The mileages given must in many cases be considered only approximate. It is a common experience in Lakeland to find the distance to a certain place indicated, and half a mile or so farther on another mile-post or stone may be encountered which gives exactly the same figures.

Regarding dangerous places and awkward hills that may be met with in ordinary running, these have, with a few exceptions, scarcely been mentioned. Such warnings have been rendered unnecessary

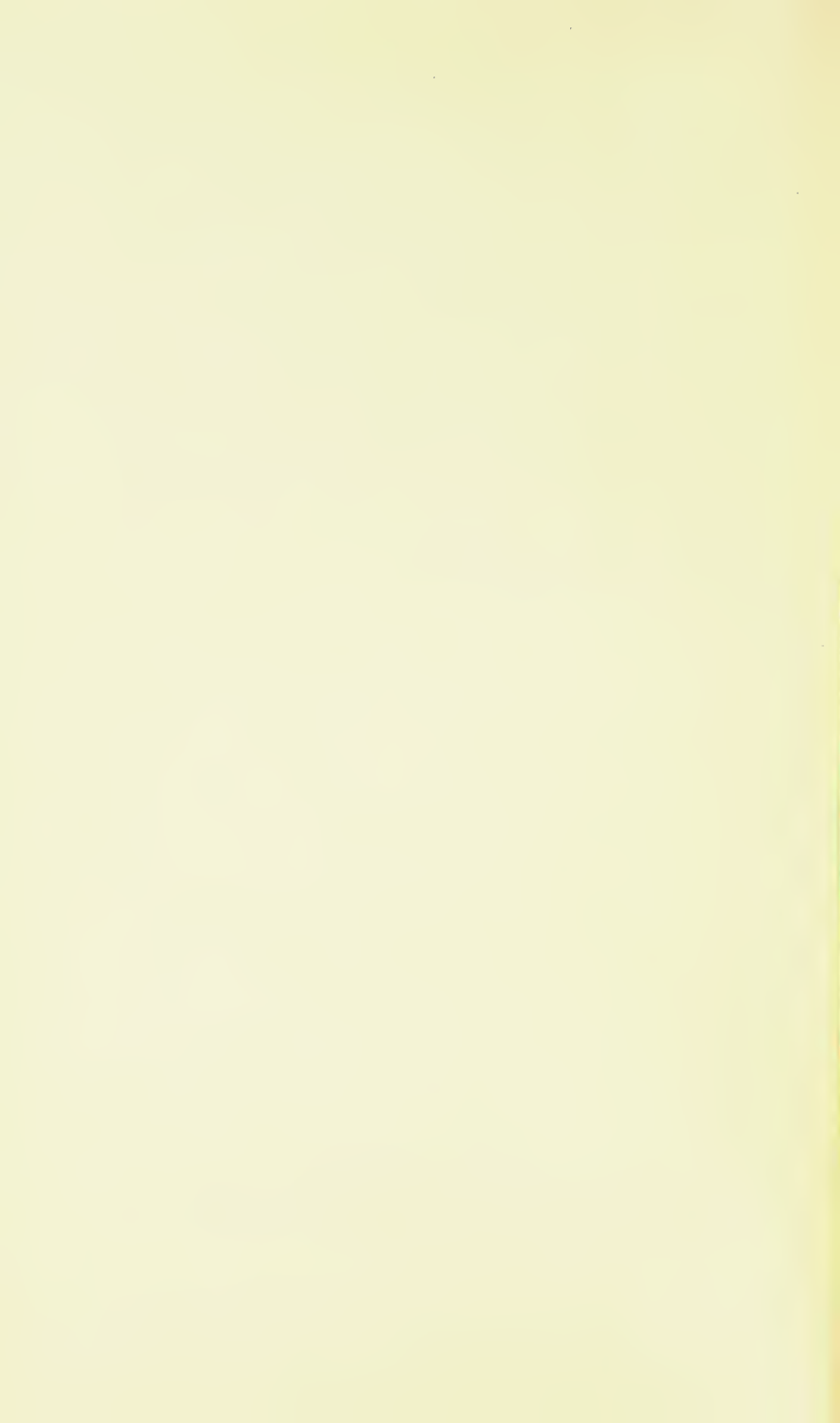
by the excellent placing of the triangular danger signs on all the principal routes described. In Lakeland these aids to safe travel deserve respect ; they are not overdone, as is so often the case in other parts of the country.

All the routes have been traversed by the author on numerous occasions, but should any topographical errors have crept in, any intimation of these would be gladly received.

G. D. A.

IDWAL, CHESTNUT HILL, KESWICK

July 1913



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MOTOR WAYS IN LAKELAND

CHAPTER I

LAKELAND: ITS OPPORTUNITIES AND INTERESTS FOR THE MOTORIST

"Go where he will, the wise man is at home,
His hearth the earth, his hall the azure dome ;
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road,
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed."

EMERSON

ALMOST midway 'twixt wild Wales and stern Caledon the motorist who speeds through western Britain may encounter some of the most beautiful scenery this world affords. The English Lake country is worth more than a passing visit. Lakes, silver-gleaming in the sunshine, peep from wood-girt vales, and, over all, the everlasting hills, crag-crowned summit-wards, stand like solemn sentinels to guard these fairest gems of nature's handiwork.

Of small area, its central portion being only some 30 miles square, the Lake region is one of wondrous variety. Every valley and lake possesses a widely different type of beauty and character. Rydal Water, softly sylvan of contour—

"Where the coarse rushes to the sweeping breeze
Sigh forth their ancient melodies"—

is a striking contrast to wild Wastwater with savage mountain solitudes begirt. In the height of summer Rydal's foliage-hung heights echo with the sound of the horn and the whirr of motors; Wastwater's storm-riven crags are silent but for the song of the mountain wind solemn and loud, or the harsh call of some wild bird of prey. Between these two extremes of beauty and grandeur there are innumerable diversified types of lake and mountain scenery, all "unimproved" by man's handiwork, excepting the Vale of Thirlmere and Crummock Water, both of which serve utilitarian purposes.

Besides its scenic attractions Lakeland abounds in interest for men of words as well as deeds. Literary students and savants have "gone to the woods and hills," and their inspired works have made the district and themselves famous.

These poetical associations attract a world-wide pilgrimage. Again, quaint traditions and superstitions of the distant past linger long in these secluded dales. Stirring tales of troublous times and bloody border warfare still survive; those were days when the "sleep that is amongst the lonely hills" had a very practical meaning.

The motorist of a scientific turn of mind, especially in the branches of geology and botany, will find this mountain region most engrossing. The sportsman who uses his car—be he hunter, golfer, fisherman, or mountaineer—will never tire of Lakeland's charms.

Thus it will be obvious that the English Lake

District is, above all, a place in which to wander fancy free, to taste, as it were, the lingering sweetness, not altogether here a thing of the past. For the speed-man, fortunately, it has few attractions; but for those who enjoy motoring with a motive it is an ideal spot. No more enjoyable holiday is possible than, with trusty car and congenial companions, to explore this land of such manifold and varied fascinations.

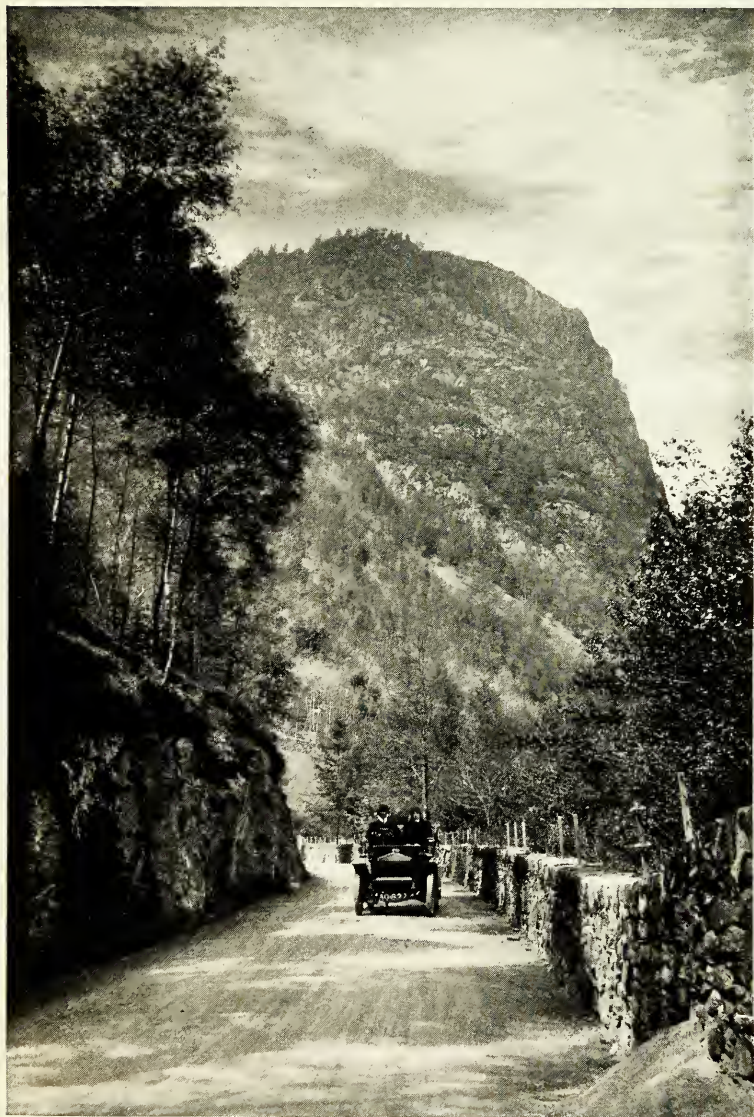
There is a joy in the open road, the thin white line stretching afar into illimitable distance where the miles fly past like the wind. We know this must pall; the powers that be assist in the disillusionment. But is there not a greater and more lasting joy in the road enfolded close midst the mountains, where arcades of bulky-limbed beeches overhang the way, and sturdy oak or waving pine add to nature's music of rustling leaves and woodland songsters—a fountain of sound to which the hum of the motor seems a tuneful accompaniment? Then come peeps of rippling waters gleaming like silver through the fretwork of foliage, and now a full sight of lake and mountain breaks across a grassy slope dotted with flowers of a thousand hues, where a singing little brook winds its downward way through the sedges to the still waters.

It is sacrilege to rush through such spots. Moreover, these places have their own traffic regulations. Old stone walls, moss-covered and beautiful to look upon, but unrelenting to light upon, line the narrow, twisting way. Gates are warily hidden round sudden corners, and local

farm stock at times officiates on point duty. Even on the main highway this feature is in evidence. For instance, at one spot, from generation to generation some doughty ducks spend their lives, and sometimes lose them, in stately parade across the road from farmyard to outhouses. In that locality their value is known, but the "innocent abroad" from afar, who runs over the "speed limit," finds that "Indian runners" run to fancy prices. Thus, for other than æsthetic reasons, it is advisable to drive slowly in Lakeland.

The centre of the district has few legal speed limits, and police traps are not known. Amble-side is decorated with the 10-mile signals, and other places are similarly threatened—a matter which rests with motorists themselves. Would that all could learn that to drive or motor fast and furiously is not worthy of pride, rather the reverse; there is real art and skill in driving slowly and steadily.

What are the roads like in Lakeland? This will doubtless be the motoring visitor's first question. These are undoubtedly unsurpassed by any mountain district in Britain, and few counties in the homeland equal Cumberland and Westmorland as a whole in this respect. Not only are the principal highways excellent in surface and construction, but the side roads and country lanes, though usually narrow and tortuous, possess good surfaces that bear no malice to tyres reasonably driven. Even the storm-swept, stone-strewn ways belie their seeming antagonism to rubber, for the



A PERFECT CUMBRIAN HIGH-WAY
BELOW RAVEN CRAG AND ABOVE THE SHORE OF THIRLMERE

loose matter is usually weather-worn and rounded. Yet with steel-studded or other armoured tyres there will be a different tale to tell. After ten years' personal experience of rough mountain tracks it has been found that plain English-made rubber tyres last longest of all. The question of skidding depends on the driver and his car. This trouble is seldom encountered in the summer-time, though during showery weather two notorious exceptions should be mentioned—the much-frequented stretch of road between Windermere and Ambleside, and the limestone surfaces near Grange-over-Sands.

Comparatively speaking, the whole district is remarkably dustless, and the tar-treated roads, in the Westmorland area especially, account largely for this condition. Tar-treated roads on the northerly side of Dunmail Raise, or, in other words, in the Cumberland Lakeland, are conspicuous by their absence. Yet here, until the outlying parts beyond the mountains are reached, the dust trouble is almost negligible, and quite so, if reasonable speeds are adopted.

Though winter touring in Lakeland is not much favoured, the peculiar conditions of that season demand notice. Detachable chains for the tyres should be carried, because these mountain wilds are peculiarly prone to sudden weather changes. Without such aid average hills are impassable. This was proved on Dunmail Raise shortly after the New Year of 1913, when eight cars were delayed until the falling snow quite

blocked the highway for the day in question. Practically, it seems that ice and snow conditions of any variety excepting impossible depths can be negotiated with chained tyres and due care. It is useful to know that if one is caught unprovided in this respect severe hills may often be overcome if the lowest gear is adopted at the foot of the slope and used throughout the ascent. To change gear on a snowy or icy incline, especially when the car is shod with plain tyres, usually results in spinning wheels and an unpleasant backward slide, during which a knowledge of tobogganing is useful. The same may be said of a forward slide due to the use of brakes on a snow-covered hill. Personal recollections of a 200-yard, wheel-locked slide downhill on Oxenfell above Elterwater prompt a feeling reference to this practical detail. With brakes useless, descent on the lowest possible gear against the engine compression seems the only feasible method. Even with such precautions the experience is undesirable. Tobogganing by motor is yet an untried branch of the winter-sport programme.

The Lake district has long been notorious for its hills, and in recent times trials and record climbs, especially by motor-cycles and side-cars, have added to this unenviable reputation. Yet it should be plainly stated that none of these special hills are on the main roads; the gradients on these latter routes can bear comparison with those of any mountain district in Britain. The trunk highway between Kendal and Keswick will

rank with that portion of the wonderful Telford Road in North Wales, between Bettws-y-Coed and Bethesda. It is vastly superior to the two trunk roads,—and here the comparison is more suitable,—through the heart of Snowdonia from Bettws-y-Coed to Portmadoc and Llanberis respectively. Of course, the old relic of Roman road-making methods is in evidence in Lakeland—a hill seemed to be made to surmount rather than to circumvent. There are numerous striking examples of this, notably on the main trunk road, where, in order to reach Keswick, a long ascent is made from Naddle Vale and over Castlerigg. A troublesome and dangerous descent to Keswick is thus entailed. How much easier it would have been to follow the main valley! Yet here as elsewhere the motorist has ample reward in a fuller prospect, for on the downward way the view over Derwent's Vale, lake-filled and mountain begirt, is one of the most beautiful in Lakeland; all Britain has nothing fairer.

Any modern car of 10 h.p. should negotiate the main road gradients with ease. Personal experience also prompts the statement that the freak hills can practically all be climbed on this power. One of the first three cars to cross Honister Pass was one of 10 h.p., and that on a day of persistent rain, driven before a wild sou'-wester. Ever since the days of the earliest 1000-miles' reliability trial Dunmail Raise has been famous, and from the Grasmere side it may be considered the most trying grade on any main road in the central or outlying portions of Lakeland.

There is in all a rise of 600 feet in three miles, but a slight downward dip should be mentioned in the lower reaches, as also the three-quarters of a mile of easy incline before the actual crest is gained. The steepest pitch comes just below the beginning of this almost level stretch. The gradient for a few yards is 1 in 7, and this comes after a mile of almost continuous climbing. From personal experience it would seem that, unless a medium-powered car with average load will climb Dunmail Raise with a gear to spare, it will scarcely negotiate such byway hills as Red Bank without disturbing the passengers. However, the matter of gradients and the fascinating sport of hill-hunting deserves and receives a fuller treatment in a later chapter.

Roughly speaking, the roads follow the beds of the main valleys, and Wordsworth's comparison of these lake-filled depressions to a wheel is an apt one, though not if a wire wheel of the detachable variety is in mind. They radiate from a centre or imaginary hub situated about midway between the lofty heights of Bowfell and Great Gable. There is no suitable abiding-place near the hub whence the traveller might find convenient access to every dale. Hence the two best head-quarters for the motorist may be considered to be Ambleside for the southerly part of Lakeland and Keswick for the north and easterly districts. The important feature should be noted that the main trunk road runs through the heart of the district from south-east to north-north-west, and there is no practicable

motor road from east to west. In the latter district the three beautiful lake valleys of Buttermere, Ennerdale, and Wastdale, undoubtedly the grandest section of the district, are at present most easily reached from Keswick. An excellent alternative is to make Seascale the centre for the exploration of the western valleys. In this case Eskdale, though lacking the beauties of a lake, should not be missed. The seaward outlook on a sunny summer's evening from the head of the dale is unique. There is an impressive contrast between the gloomy rocky wastes of savage Scawfell, close at hand, and the distant coast-line, field-full and fertile, bathed in all the crimson glory of the sunset glow.

The hotel accommodation is excellent even in such remote spots as Eskdale, where, it may be noted, the smallest railway in England has now ceased from running. In some places far distant from supplies—ten miles from a railway station is no uncommon feature—a preliminary letter is advisable, otherwise the tender-hearted members of a party may witness the capture and slaughter of some active chicken to serve for the evening meal.

Numerous motorists have recently begun to realize the charms of the simple life in a Lake-country farmhouse. In Borrowdale especially, notably at Seatoller, in the very heart of the loftiest mountains, this ideal may be fulfilled. At Patterdale, Langdale, and in the wild recesses of Tilberthwaite splendid accommodation may be

found for travellers and their car. Some of these old-fashioned farm-steads offer interesting opportunities for studying the dalesmen's ways and means of living, "far from gay cities and the ways of men."

The picturesque old houses seem scarcely of man's handiwork. With walls moss-prankt and lichen-covered, and green-slabbed roofs wrought ages ago from the storm-sheltering mountain close at hand, they have more the appearance of growth than of ordinary construction. Inside, though antiquity reigns supreme, all is trim and comfortable. The "parlour" will be up to date and uninteresting, and the kitchen, the real living-room, quite the reverse. With floors flagged of local stone, sparsely hidden by some home-made rag carpets, and an oak-beamed ceiling supported by walls panelled to match, the colour-scheme is at once delightful. Pictorial adornments are few or entirely lacking, and, after all, what better picture can there be than the sides of Cumberland bacon that hang all around. Unlike Cumberland lead pencils, these are still to be had, and are amongst some of the bargains obtained by knowing motorists who visit these parts. Many of the wonderful old oak furnishings, oft-times family heirlooms of hundreds of years ago, are disappearing. It is almost a relief to know that nowadays in the more popular parts these relics are being produced in a day or two, things of beauty, but not joys for ever when disillusionment arrives. If a bargain has to be made, these old Cumbrian dalesmen can hold



A CUMBRIAN FARM KITCHEN

WITH ITS BLACK OAK BEAMS AND PANELINGS, THE QUANT OLD FARM OF BROTHERILKELD IN ESKDALE IS TYPICAL OF MANY
A SPOT WHERE MOTORISTS MAY FIND AN INTERESTING RESTING-PLACE

their own with all the world. Innumerable stories might accentuate this, but an encounter which a motoring friend had with "auld Jobby Tomson o' Swindale" is typical of some of the local characters.

After some bargaining Jobby said he would send a grand leg of pork home. This never came, and a week or two later the old man was met in the road.

"Hello, Jobby!" said the motorist, "where's that leg of pork?"

"Ah, man," came the quick reply, "it got better!"

Of course, such an experience is exceptional, for the Lake-country dalesfolk are as stolid and dependable as their mountains, but if it comes to a battle of wits or muscle they are bad to beat on their own ground.

There are few families unaffected by the spirit of those earliest tourists who appreciated these parts—the hardy Norsemen. In appearance the resemblance is unmistakable, with their big bones, muscular bodies, clear blue or light grey eyes, and broad faces crowned with hair fair as the sun-bleached sedges on the open fells. On the valley levels they have the same ambling gait as the Norse mountain men of to-day, and the walk still more noticeable in the Alpine guides. But on hilly ground these men are at home, their feet and leg muscles are differently made to those of the lowlander, and woe betide the southron who attempts to follow them close at heel in a fell hunt. Though they are built on liberal lines, their strength is undoubted. If the motorist fancy his muscles in tune after much wrestling with re-

fractory tyres, let him "try a fall" with a Cumbrian dalesman. The result will probably induce him to go into training on simple mountain fare.

This is the real "havver meal," a form of porridge or havver bread. It is the staple food of the more remote districts, and will probably be voted a delicacy by the south-country motorist, who only knows the modern, weakly, made-up substitutes. Porridge, or, as it is locally called, "th' poddish," is always referred to in the plural as "them." After being stirred "wid a thivel" in the making, you sup them "wid nobbut fresh milk" out of a basin, and probably enjoy them if they are not "smeuked" or "bishopped." That "poddish maks ter'ble big banging bairns and plenty on 'em" is evident all over Lakeland. If the "childer" are "hefty" enough to manage barley-meal "poddish," all the better. This variety is known as "kittly slipdowns." However, this engrossing subject must not be pursued further; let the motorist himself test the truth of Wordsworth's lines—

"Not undelightful are the simple charms
Found at the grassy doors of mountain farms."

Little need be said here regarding the place-names and their origins, most of which are Norse. The common use of thwaite, garth, fell, and force exemplify this. But the Lake-country dialect has a very practical interest for the motorist, especially when he wanders on the less-frequented roads. The pedestrian portion of the district is easier

to travel in than some of the places that have been visited since the motor-horn became the note of the age. The car cannot climb walls and fences, and wander fancy free o'er field and fell or other folk's property. On inquiring the way the owner may himself be utterly unable to understand the answer, for the "Cummerlan mak o' tawk" has little resemblance to literary English. The situation may be trying to the temper, but let the traveller not assign it to lack of intellect or courtesy on the part of the native, and behave accordingly. The names as spelt on the maps are very often misleading. One that has led to unpleasantness on many occasions is the village of Bothel, an important spot where many roads meet in the north-west limit of Lakeland. The question, "Is this the correct way to Bothel?" will be received with blank incomprehension. But "Whor's Baw'l?" will arouse intelligence and a quick reply. Torpenhow in the same district is somewhat puzzling. It is pronounced "Trepanna," and Overwater is locally known as "Owerwatter." "Stean-wet" is Stonethwaite, and it may be noted that either "wet" or "thet" is the usual pronunciation of the Norse ending, as "Sea-thet" for Seathwaite. There are numerous curious names on the maps due to the early Ordnance men's errors with the native dialect. Toppat Fell is the result of an inquiry from a local worthy as to the name of a certain peak above the valley. "Oh, that's nobbut top o' t' fell," was the reply. Another example is Downydale. The words used were simply "down in t' dale."

Much entertainment can be obtained from the study of the names of the surroundings in many of the Lake-country valleys.

In these days of luxurious motor equipment and travel, motorists visit the Lake district at all seasons of the year. But the fresh-air man who drives his own car may prefer the best months. Like all mountainous districts Lakeland has a full share of rain. December, January, and February usually make the records in this respect. But in the summer months August, the fashionable season in the Lake district, is wettest of all. Hence undoubtedly arises much of our ill-repute in this respect. For, after all, excepting in one special area, the rainfall compares more than favourably with that of Scotland or Snowdonia, and recent records show a remarkable prevalence of sunshine, very little short of some of the sunniest places in the country. The rain comes down in no uncertain manner; three inches in a day is not an uncommon event at the head of Borrowdale. At such times the fall is aptly described by the natives as "yaall watter"—whole water. In fact, in weather matters extremes meet in Lakeland; it is either very wet or very fine. The most settled conditions come with the east, south-east, or north-east winds. Rain is noticeably rare under these conditions, but with a south-west wind the reverse prevails. Any breeze from a direction south-south-west to west-north-west brings rain. A north-west wind means showery conditions, usually with beautiful intervals lengthening as the day progresses.

The motorist in this mountain district who wishes to make the most of this weather knowledge should understand that weathercocks are practically useless. The contours of mountains and valleys deflect the air in a most uncertain manner. It is the lofty wind that counts, and the high clouds show its direction. These are the friends of the weather prophet. The valley may be filled with damp vapour carried on a westerly breeze, and low mists float heavily across the mountain slopes. But overhead fleecy white clouds sail steadily across from the north-east. This almost invariably means improving weather—if not the same day, the following one will most probably provide perfect weather.

May and June are almost invariably fine, and the same may be said of the latter half of September and the first half of October ; in fact, the whole of the latter month is often the best of the year. November fogs stay south of Morecambe Bay, and the first half of this month frequently affords many perfect days in which to enjoy the autumn tints to perfection. This is the time when the wonderful colour effects reach their climax. Few know the beauty of early November. 'Tis then the purple peaks, tipped with the early snows of oncoming winter, begin to show from unaccustomed spots as the leafy screen of the late summer's mantle falls away ; all the woodland is ablaze with colour warmth, and every path a russet trod through avenues of golden glory.

For the motorist with sporting tendencies Lake-

land fox-hunting will probably have some interest. On account of the roughness of the country all the sport is undertaken on foot, and whether a "kill" be seen or not, a splendid day on the fells is assured, with an evening appetite and thirst to match, to judge by the way the proverbial "tatie pot" and other details disappear after the day's work. The foxes are prone to follow certain "runs" on the fells, and it is advisable to become the protégé of some local enthusiast who knows how to "foreset" the hunt. Under such guidance some wonderful views may be obtained with comparatively little exertion. In fact, in certain localities the run may be followed by means of the motor, and this plan is becoming much favoured. In most parts the season extends from October to the end of April, sometimes later if the foxes become too fond of the young lambs. There is certainly some argument in favour of the utilitarian purposes of fox-hunting in this rough country. In the wilder recesses the mountain farmers and shepherds suffer considerably, and drastic methods are adopted in order to destroy the wily depredators. In the central and craggiest district the natives arise in arms, and during the night fires are lit in the rock fastnesses where the fox "bields" with his prey. With retreat thus cut off, and after him a horde of hunters bent on his destruction by any possible means, sly Reynard's days and misdeeds are often numbered.

The Eskdale Foxhounds hunt this rocky district, and their music is frequently heard midst

the savage recesses of Scawfell. The fox hereabouts has usually the best of the argument. The motorist can receive little help from his machine in following this hunt, but the Blencathra Hounds, with their kennels at Threlkeld, near Keswick, hunt a fell country that is eminently suitable for following by car. These famous dogs are descended from John Peel's pack, and their Master for many years was the Speaker of the House of Commons. Ullswater, Coniston, and Buttermere (the Mell-break) have their packs, whilst the Cumberland Foxhounds hunt the open country around Penrith in the ordinary style. The Cockermouth Beagles and Windermere Harriers in their respective districts attract large followings, but perhaps the most sporting beagles are those at Hesket Newmarket—in John Peel's country—run by that hardy huntsman, Mr. Arthur Lawson, a son of the late famous temperance squire of Brayton Hall. There are otter hounds at Kendal and Cockermouth—the former frequent the neighbourhood of Windermere in the summer-time.

With the exception of Windermere the fishing in the Lakes has, like all the best fish, never caught on. The district is not a special angler's resort like the North of Scotland and other places visited solely for their piscatorial possibilities. The Windermere and District Angling Association is a flourishing body, and the largest lake is stocked with trout, pike, perch, char, and eel. The fly-fishing in Windermere is rapidly becoming first-class, thanks to the success of the association's fish

hatchery at Cunsey. On a favourable day an average angler might expect his basket to contain trout varying from half a pound to five pounds each in weight. The char, "the golden Alpine trout," requires special knowledge and skill in the taking; it is well to seek the advice of local fishermen before the usual plumb-line trolling is attempted. Most of these fish are now netted for commercial purposes under the auspices of the association.

An authority describes a Windermere char as "almost twice the size of a herring. Its back is of an olive green, its belly of a light vermilion, softening in some parts into white and changing into a deep red at the injection of the fins." A smaller variety is caught in Coniston Water, but those taken in Buttermere and Crummock Water, the only other important lakes which contain this rare and beautiful fish, are scarcely inferior to the golden char of Windermere. Motoring parties in the Buttermere Valley especially should not forget the potted char: it is a delectable delicacy of the district. Special licences are required for practically all the fine fishing in the Lake district, and many waters—notably Thirlmere and several mountain tarns—are only privately available for the sport. Local hotel proprietors can give information regarding "leaves" in various districts.

In these days when golf clubs seem almost necessary accessories on a touring car, a few words regarding the royal and ancient game in Lakeland may be advisable. Enthusiasts will find several

first-class courses available, and as these are situated in the outlying parts the car is of great service and indispensable if all are to be visited. Seascale (18 holes) is probably best of all, with Silloth —also 18 holes—a good second. Embleton, near Cockermouth, is a new full-length course loftily situated and with fine views of Skiddaw and Bassenthwaite. Golfers in the Windermere district have an excellent selection of two courses, whilst, according to one of the illustrated papers, Keswick boasts of “the most beautiful golf course in Britain.”

For mountaineering our English mountains possess unique attractions both in summer and winter, but this healthy sport and the approaches to the popular mountain excursions by motor deserve and must receive fuller attention. Enough has been said to show that the motorist who is active in mind and body will find the Lake district an ideal touring-ground. Its interests are so diverse, and its natural beauties from day to day so varying and infinitely delightful, that a lifetime might be spent in its study. Yet even then the half would remain unknown and unseen.

CHAPTER II

A SPRING-TIME WAY INTO LAKELAND —THE OTHER APPROACHES

“Earth is a wintry clod :
But Spring-wind, like a dancing psaltress, passes
Over its breast to waken it, rare verdure
Buds tenderly upon rough banks, between
The withered tree roots and the crack of frost,
Like a smile striving with a wrinkled face.”

R. BROWNING

IT was mid-April. From John o' Gaunt's beacon tower on Lancaster's "embattled pile" we had spied out land and weather, and both were fair to see. And now the open road wound northwards, at first a very ordinary, English highway, with o'ershading oak, elm, and beech heralding, each in its way, the on-coming summer.

Later, with memory bestirred by the modern road-repairing methods, we thought of Leland's words of ancient times : "A few myles from Lancastre the counteri began to be stony, and a little to wax montainious." Then far to the left, across the glimmering breadth of Morecambe Bay, the dun, grey, cloudlike outlines gradually took on the form of distant mountains. Sudden gradients lifted us over grassy foothills ; the reek of West-



A LAKELAND LANE—SCENE IN SPRING-TIME



morland peat was in the air, and craggy heights betokened a country of sterner mould.

Smoky Carnforth was far behind, and the divergence from the old Scotch highway to Burton and Kendal had recalled the early days in that wild district. Though not completed until 1755, the road was originally planned to trap the bands of outlawed, plunder-seeking Scots; but now, alas! in these enlightened times Scots and Englishmen alike are trapped. Yet theirs, at least, is a peaceful pilgrimage; to others the plunder.

The newer road by which we travelled kept nearer the coast: it possessed the better surface and fewer hills; moreover, Levens Bridge was to be our westerly turning-point, and the Burton road would miss this in the direct run to Kendal. There was ample evidence that ours was the popular route: aggressively ugly stock signs were tiring to the eye and the budding hedgerows lay thick in dust. It was only near the speed limits at Beetham, Milnthorpe, and Heversham that the country-side showed its full beauty. Milnthorpe, with its treacherous cross-roads of tragic memory, where even a 5-miles' limit may be dangerous, gave a final glimpse down and across the sandy strands of Morecambe Bay. It was evident that the most direct way from Lancaster to Lakeland was the old shore route and across the Morecambe Sands. Wordsworth's advice to Mrs. Hemans, that this was the finest entrance into the Lakes, has made numerous enthusiasts adventure with the deceptive tides. The route may be followed to-day

and almost dry-shod if a local guide is taken near Hest Bank. Horses and carts make the journey, but it is virgin ground—or sand—for the motor-car.

Heversham, with its pretty church, beautiful of situation, but for this reason the cause of an ugly, narrow corner unbeloved of everything on tyres, was left amidst a wealth of greenery, and soon the blank, bare wall of Levens Hall blocked all the western prospect. Fortunately, it was not a Thursday, so there was no call for a halt to see the famous clipped yews and hear the old story of the departed Bellinghams, to whom the ancient toast, "Luck to Levens as long as the Kent flows," availed nothing. Yet as we swung suddenly off to the left from the main road to Kendal, five miles away, it was interesting to recall that here, at Levens Hall, Mrs. Humphry Ward wrote *Helbeck of Bannisdale*. We were ere long to "course the flower-decked vale" of Winster amongst memories of the well-known story.

And now the speed-gods called from mountain ridges towering beyond miles of the levels of Lyth. There was scarce time to note the tender, cadmium colourings mantling the sombre peats, or scan the distant damson groves which a few weeks later would burst into snow-white splendour like "winter in the lap of spring." With a perfect road below and cloudless heaven above, we sped onwards under rugged Whitbarrow, whose limestone scars, gleaming alabastrous in the midday light, roused memories of the Dolomites in far-off sunny Tyrol.

The notorious hill of Towtop was to be our

first aim : it ranks with Red Bank and Honister Pass as one of our country's hardest problems that wheeled things on tyres may solve. At the Derby Arms, five miles from Levens Bridge, we were to leave the main road and strike northwards into the mountains. At the old-fashioned inn, much to our amusement, a lady from the south endeavoured to discover the whereabouts of Towtop. The lady from the north who attended our questioner stared blankly. "Nivver hard on't!" came the curt reply. "It mun be Kendal way," was the only other answer to our puzzled companion's persistency. Our map failed to mark the hill, but we knew it was somewhere close at hand. Then my local accent was tried, and at once came enlightenment. "Ah yes! It's th' How Top ye want!" In a few minutes we were away again, thinking of the local solution of the curiously named hill—the How Top—now Towtop.

A few hundred yards beyond the Derby Arms we swung to the left in the tree-embowered village of Townend, and the road that eventually would have led to Witherslack Hall, the residence of Lord Derby, was followed for two-thirds of a mile. There an unlikely sharp turn to the left was taken, and the fair valley of the Winster was unfolded, stretching northwards.

The road at present led straight across the dale. Some use of the second gear had ere this reminded us that the main highway was left : the surroundings were changed unmistakably. Instead of dusty hedgerows, our way now lay between rough stone

walls, olive green and brown with mountain moss, and then by lush, verdured banks, soon to be be-starred with stitchwort, yellow pimpernel, and the flaming flowerets of the wild geranium. Instead of the rush of the speed-way, here was peace far from the strident notes of impatient followers. But yet lusty life was athrob everywhere, and nature's music of wild life and wind in the waving larches spoke with the breath of spring.

In front rose the rugged westerly wall of the dale, and a thin line, sinuous and steep, rose airily to a dip in the skyline. This was Towtop. At its foot we left the car in the scented shade of feathery willows, and climbed the rough mountainous slope of the hill to the eyrie, whence the best view of the desperate corners was to be had. There we ate our bread and cheese with the freshest of water-cress, plucked from the little brook that sang its way merrily valleywards to rest midst the daffodil banks of the Winster.

Meanwhile, I told the story of a previous visit, when a record-breaking expert and side-car had travelled all the way from Birmingham to essay the first climb of its kind up Towtop. A large party of us had come from the north by a different route. It was a morning of gale and rain, and a fierce nor'-wester had chased us through the dales: the downpour was phenomenal.

At midday the storm had o'erpassed us; the sun shone forth triumphantly. Then, far ahead, Helvellyn's breast, bejewelled with watery splendour and stream-lined with silver threads, glistened won-

drously in the slanting sunlight. As we slid noiselessly down the Pass of Dunmail the chorus of many waters was in our ears : dry hollows were torrent-filled, each rill was a river and every stream sonorous. Now far ahead the ghostlike wraith of cloud and storm hurried loftily onward, like some giant fury in full flight, to disappear beyond the wilds of Wansfell. The sun held sway for the rest of the day.

Then at Towtop we had gathered on the most fearsome and roughest of the eight bends, where the gradient verged on 1 in 4. The foot of the hill was visible some hundreds of feet below. The roar of the "twin" came up to us ; a film of smoke hid the unnecessary signallers. "He's away!" was the cry. The first turn was taken slowly—a necessary precaution, as some riders proved later. Up came the sturdy machine, straining, swinging, bumping, and jumping over the mountainous slope, the driver and his passenger masters of craft in feats of balance and control. Their strained faces seemed to leap suddenly upwards out of the depths as they appeared over the profile of the gradient at the third turn. The speed flung them across the stony surface with a surprising skid, stirring to spectators, car, and climbers alike. The front wheel swung almost at right angles to the direction of progress. But the balance was just regained for the next turn, which was encountered instantly.

Here was the worst surface. The driving wheel spun wildly, bits of Towtop were flung all around painfully, as at least one of the spectators

could prove. Progress was checked, but not stopped. Gradually the driving wheel found more solid ground, and a shout of relief rent the air as we saw the speed increase. With a roar of satisfaction, as it were, the machine dashed up the straight to the upper turns and out of sight overhead, never faltering to the summit.

On this later occasion there was no such riot of movement or sound. Now no roar of motors came up to us from below. Nature was voiceless among the brown rocks and heather, except that from the valley there rose the quavering echoes of the curlew's call—an eerily lonesome note to some, but friendly and heartsome for those who love the heights and the open spaces of the earth. The view was unique from such a meagre altitude. Far below, the blue of Helton Tarn peeped heavenwards from the flowery sedge lands, and higher up, the limestone escarpments beyond Winster Vale carried the eye far away and northwards to range beyond range of blue mountains, with the Pennines rising dimly above the eastern lowland haze. To the south swept Morecambe Bay and its fertile palatine littoral, where the House of Lancaster and its red rose partisans flourished in past days of royal favour.

Then quitting the romantic, we raced down Towtop from crest to car, and ere departing paused to note the signpost at the foot of the hill. This was a reminder that Towtop had busy interests in the old packhorse and coaching days, for over the heights passed the traffic from Kendal to

Ulverston and the Furness district. Close at hand stood the ruins of the old building in which were kept a reserve of horses and ropes wherewith to haul the heavy traffic over the hill. Then, again, the waterway from Helton Tarn helped to make history of world-wide importance. It was there that John Wilkinson, a local genius, surprised the natives by making and floating the first iron boat that ever was sailed. This remarkable craft, the germ of our modern Dreadnoughts, was used for carrying peats in connection with Wilkinson's iron industries. Its remains lie hidden somewhere amongst the rushes below the lonely tarn.

From the four road ends at the foot of Towtop—for the Lindale road came in here from the south—we turned northwards and followed up the west side of the Winster Valley throughout. This latter was important, for on a former occasion we had experienced troublesome adventures amidst mist and hill-side tracks on the east flank of the dale.

Our road now was narrow, but quite excellent of surface and of sufficient sinuosity to prevent the driver's enjoyment of the surrounding scenery. Partly amongst hazel-bedecked knolls rich in their spring scents, and partly through sparsely clad meadows, where white lambs frolicked amongst the daffodils, our onward way stretched. Suddenly we emerged from a thicker coppice into a foldlet in the hills; the golden blaze of daffodils was everywhere. Even the shades of the coppice were afire with the yellow light, and a hurrying

rivulet flashed back the glories of its aureate way. It was impossible to pass such an arcade. Juvenile arms were soon enfolding the lavish bloom, whilst older folk revelled lazily in the loveliness. Every step amongst the blooms seemed cruel sacrilege. Yet a noisy little waterfall tempted us upwards. 'Midst the tumbling water every mossy rock and turfy islet was daffodilled; the hardy flower seemed to swing and dance in playful revels amongst the restless moil of waters. Then would come some quieter pool with the sturdier golden plumes breeze-sheltered and mirrored in the quiet waters, where luscious mosses and spray-swayed plants formed fairy caves amongst the boulders. It seemed like a corner of fairyland itself.

Then the sun sank, westering towards the hill of Cartmel: a damp, chill mist in the hollow showed that summer was not yet. The daffodils followed us for miles: their memories must live for a lifetime.

At the old-fashioned farm-stead of Hodge Hill, with its Elizabethan frontage and balcony, our road turned away to the right. But up beyond the steep, sharp turning to the left the old Church of Cartmel Fell looked down invitingly from the now wood-thinned height. Few would care to pass without making the few minutes' climb to see the quaint mountain sanctuary dedicated to St. Anthony, and set amongst the rocks and the flowery slopes. The recent restoration has destroyed much of its original charm, yet there were still the wonderful old windows, the baptistery, and the square, four-post pews. Also

by one of these latter there remained the curious inscription in memory of one, Betty Poole by name, aged only three years—

“Underneath this stone A Mould’ring Virgin lies
Who was the pleasure once of Human Eyes
Her blaze of charms Virtue well approv’d
The gay admired, much the parents lov’d
Transitory life, death untimely came
Adieu, Farewell, I only leave my name.”

Below in the dale again we followed the road to the right, now down in grassy hollows where wandered swiftly silent streams draped with water-cress, anon high up on treeless knolls where all the valley loveliness lay revealed. Small farms, grey and white, peeped from budding screens of spring-time greenery, and at one of these, Cowmire Hall, a sharp and hurried turn to the left was taken. This was not to escape from the place of unpleasing name, but to reach Bowlands Bridge, the first important village thus far encountered in the Winster Valley. In the village a motor-car was evidently a big attraction ; to the motorists the sight of a thin grey line winding up the westerly mountain’s front was still more attractive. The road seemed precipitous in the afternoon light, but fortunately this Bowlands Bridge Hill¹ was not our way.

It was the rough route over Cartmel Fell, whence in a descent of sudden, stony steepness the foot of Windermere may be reached. On that side the hill is known as Gummershow : it dashed the hopes of many of the riders in the one-day cycle-car and

¹ Or Strawberry Bank.

motor-cycle trials of 1912. Our inquiries regarding the Bowlands Bridge Hill were not encouraging. The native reply to a question regarding its surface was, "Suffus is it ye want? Nay nay! it nivver hed yan."

Thus we were glad to turn off to the right, and in less than a quarter of a mile an unexpected corner on the left led into the straight road to Winster—at least so we were told by a friend in need who appeared and saved us a long detour Kendal-wards. Certainly the road was direct enough, but at Hartbarrow, a mile and a half farther on, there was an acute-angled corner and sudden downward drop that would surprise any speedman driving a long wheel-based car in that engrossing district. Then over larchy hillocks and past daffodil dells, once more we mounted the valley and, passing the yew-shrouded Church of Winster, finally entered the village itself nestling amongst the emerald sheen of budding elms and gnarled fruit-trees.

Just beyond the village the old highway slanting up to the right was neglected, and soon far away in front the shapely peak of Bowfell, still tipped with winter whiteness, sent friendly greeting beyond lower ranges as yet invisible. Soon came the fuller prospect and peeps of the Lake of Windermere, beauteous in woodland splendour and passing rich in its surroundings; instead of mossy cottages, stuccoed mansions struck the vision. The dusty 3-miles' run to Bowness, with its busy, converging roads, roused thoughts of the wonders of modern motor travel. A few minutes sufficed to bring us



EVENING ON WINDERMERE—EARLY SPRINGTIME

THE TWIN PEAKS OF THE LANGDALES ARE SHOWN ON THE RIGHT, AND BOWFELL ON THE LEFT

from the quaint surroundings of an old-world civilization into all the turmoil of modern life with, in the dale, hurrying crowds, luxurious hotels, and busy steam-boats, and, in the heavens, the scurrying hydroplane, its ponderous hum echoing afar. The poet's wander-vale, Wynandermere, has gone for ever. Steam and petrol have "straightened it out."

The little-known approach to the Lake district by the Valley of Winster has also many attractions in the summer-time, one of which is its comparative freedom from traffic and the accompanying dust. With the contiguity of the limestone formation it is probably richer in wild flowers and botanical rarities than any other dale in Lakeland. Orchids of many varieties flourish lavishly; columbines, white, blue, and purple, are common in the fields—a rarity seldom met with anywhere else in England; and the pale green hellebore may yet be found. It is a famous resort of the fern-hunter, and most of the British varieties can be discovered.

For the hurrying motorist who prefers straight roads and company thereon the best approach from this true south end of Lakeland is by Lindale, after turning from the main Lancaster-Kendal road at Levens Bridge. Lindale is two miles short of Grange-over-Sands, and from the former straggling little village there is a steep climb of nearly 400 feet in one and a half miles, where most drivers will run through their gamut of gears. Above the steepest part the road from Grange-over-Sands comes in and those without hill-climbing ambitions may

prefer to go around by this latter somewhat longer but easier route. From the crest of the long, easy, culminating gradient there is a wonderful outlook over the westerly Lakeland heights with Conistone Old Man predominant. Undulating country brings the foot of Windermere in sight, and those bound direct for Bowness might note that the main road is not for them : it goes to Newby Bridge at the foot of the lake. A mile short of this place there is a branch to the right, and this leads straight ahead to Bowness. The road abounds in troublesome gradients.

The shortest way in distance, if not in time, from Levens Bridge to Bowness on Windermere is by Gilpin's Bridge, the valley of the Gilpin, and Crowthwaite. Only twelve miles separate the two former places, but the road is hilly and lacks the many interests and varied beauties of the longer Winster Valley. During the first half of May, when the damson bloom is in full glory, an almost parallel route up the eastern side of the broad valley is worth remembering. It begins by taking the first roadway to the right after turning west at Levens Bridge. Just before reaching Brigsteer the roadside is carpeted for nearly a mile with wild lilies of the valley. The scent of the beautiful flowers often proclaims their presence before they are actually seen. From Brigsteer, on the right, rises the well-known hill of motor-cycle test fame. It may be followed over Scout's Scar to Kendal.

Inasmuch as numerous routes from both south and east converge at Kendal, this town may be considered for motorists the most important gate-

way into the Windermere portion of Lakeland. Besides the main highway from the south by Lancaster, there is the route from Kirby Stephen and Barnard Castle, the one from the east by Hawes and Sedbergh, and also the most frequented of this series, the road from the south-east via Keighley, Settle, Ingleton, and Kirby Lonsdale. The graceful and artistic Devil's Bridge at the latter place impresses most motorists, especially should traffic be encountered during the narrow crossing: art and utility are again at variance. The view from Kirby Lonsdale churchyard is worth the halt in the old-fashioned town, and for some the limestone caves near Ingleton and Clapham possess attractions. It should be noted that the steep hill of ill-repute between Sedbergh and Kendal has lost few of its terrors, though nowadays the surface is usually excellent.

Most motorists who approach Lakeland from the east-north-east make Keswick their objectif. For North Riding motorists Barnard Castle is not on the main route over Stainmoor, but many prefer a slight divergence to see the beautiful river thereabouts and join the direct road again at Bowes. Thence an easy grade, but usually an uneasy surface, brings one up to the crest of Stainmoor by an old Roman Camp 1468 feet above sea-level. Beyond the storm-swept, upper reaches the road is generally good during the long descent to Brough, and thence most excellent to Appleby and Penrith. This latter place may be considered the gateway into the northern or Derwentwater region of Lakeland.

Through Keswick lies the best route to the western side of the district. Many travellers from the south also prefer the latter plan, for the road through the Furness area and around Black Combe is mountainous and circuitous ; moreover, the way is difficult to find as well as follow.

Motorists coming to the Lakes from the northerly centres on the north-east coast are undoubtedly favoured with the most beautiful approach of all. This is by way of Alston. The Tyne Valley is followed at first through Corbridge and Hexham. Near Haydon Bridge, less than four miles beyond the latter place, there is a well-marked divergence to the left, and ere long the road winds steadily upwards for miles 'midst larchy heights. The gradients prove surprisingly favourable, and beyond Whitfield the open moors are gained where the road swerves on and upwards to a culminating height of over 1500 feet above sea-level. Thence there is a steady downward speed-way to Alston, beyond which begins another exhilarating climb to the summit of Hartside, where the loftiest main road in England reaches an altitude of nearly 1900 feet. So excellently is the road graded that most modern cars will make the ascent without any movement of the gear handle.

The views meanwhile are magnificent. Dour old Crossfell, the home of the Helm Wind, keeps guard over this lone land of mountain and moor. In winter-time it is a fearsome spot to meet a wild nor'-easter ; the upright wooden posts peep lonesomely through the snow at such a time and have

guided many a weary traveller to safety. Then beyond Hartside Height, if old Crossfell be not pouring down his sonorous cloud-wreath into the western dales, there is a prospect unsurpassed of its kind in the country. Far below, the road dips over into the depths and winds serpentine into the beautiful vale of the Eden. Compared with one's bleak surroundings, it is a veritable Garden of Eden, rich in pastoral delights, and clad in emerald garb of full fertility. Then far beyond miles and miles of rich meadow-land crouch the purple peaks of Lakeland in far-extended line from north to south. Scarcely one of the giants is missing to the man who knows their contours, from shapely Skiddaw on the north to rugged Helvellyn in the centre and Conistoun Old Man far down in the hazy south.

Then ever down one glides to and fro on the mountain face in well-spaced zigzag, reminded meanwhile of the wonderful Alpine highways, for here below Crossfell Scars is the only English road to compare with such. Gradually the pines come up to meet one, then the ash, and elms speak back the echoing swish of the motor's flight, until oak-hung Melmerby gives greeting and the valley levels are under wheel once more. A very ordinary, English highway gives access to Langwathby, with its dangerous bridge across the Eden, and finally Penrith leads onward into the heart of Lakeland.

A much-favoured alternative route from the north-east coast lies up the Tyne Valley and thus to Carlisle. From Corbridge onwards the road on the south side of the Tyne basin is better than the

deviation on the north, though the latter plan affords an approach to the remains of the Roman Wall. From Carlisle there is a choice of two routes to Keswick—that by Penrith, if taken direct, is four miles longer than the 32-mile run by the Wigton road and Bothel. Wigton itself need not be visited; the shorter way is to keep to the left at Thursby and continue to Bothel by Red Dial. The moorland road between Bothel and Keswick is now quite first-class, a considerable sum having been spent on its widening and resurfacing. An interesting variation on this approach is to diverge sharply to the left at Red Dial, and follow the good road to Caldbeck in the heart of John Peel's country. Thence a narrower, less satisfactory route can be made through Hesket Newmarket and Mungrisdale to join the Penrith-Keswick road about eight miles from the latter centre. This is shorter than the usual course through Bothel, and those who enjoy less-frequented roads, which call for skilful driving withal, will appreciate this approach through John Peel's country to the full.

Inasmuch as the routes from Scotland converge at Carlisle, the former and following suggestions apply also to those travelling to Lakeland from the north. If the Penrith route is selected, in preference to that by Bothel or Caldbeck, the splendid surface of the main north road on that section tempts to speed—a temptation wisely to be resisted, for speed restrictions of expensive tendency are apt to be applied. Motorists with less interest in pace

than in the country they travel through may enlarge their programme by visiting one of the most famous beauty spots on the banks of the Eden. This is the glen of the Nunnery Walks.

The Carlisle-Penrith highway should be left about half a mile short of High Hesket and the Eden crossed at Armathwaite. Thence it is a beautiful 4-mile ride along the vale of the Eden to the Nunnery, the entrance to which may be missed as it is situated to the right during the descent of a long hill of some steepness. The glen repays lengthy inspection, and it should be followed throughout its length to where the river—the Croglin by name—empties itself into the Eden. From the Nunnery, Penrith may best be gained through Kirkoswald and Great Salkeld, finally arriving by the Alston road.

For all, at least, who travel east or north-eastwards on their homeward way from Lakeland, the wonderful journey over the Alston Heights should be made. Given a lusty car, with the joy of the hills in its vitals, the uplifting over that grandly graded road into the lofty solitudes is an unalloyed delight. And should the westering sun suffuse the distant mountain ranges with crimsoned glory, the experience may leave

“Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.”

Hartside is the height ideal from which to bid farewell to Lakeland.

CHAPTER III

THE MAIN TRUNK ROAD—FROM KENDAL TO GRASMERE

“Region separate, sacred, of mere, and of ghyll, and of mountain,
Garrulous, petulant beck, sinister, laughterless tarn ;
Haunt of the vagabond feet of my fancy for ever reverting,
Haunt and home of my heart, Cumbrian valleys and fells ;
Yours of old was the beauty that rounded my hours with a
nimbus,
Touched my youth with bloom, tender and magical light ;
You were my earliest passion, and when shall my fealty falter ?
Ah ! when Helvellyn is low ! Ah, when Winander is dry !”

WATSON

UP one glides from the smoky hollow of Kendal, the towny dwellings that flank the steepness of the House of Correction Hill echoing with the song of the gear and the hum of the pulling engine. For the flats of the Midlands and the South are far behind, and this is the first reminder of the approach of the mountains. Yet to the modern motor it is a mild incline, and one is soon atop in the higher, purer air with the smooth ochreous Yorkshire moors behind, and in front the crag-flecked pasture heights of the Lakeland foothills.

Two miles of steady uplifting bring the upper levels under wheel, and a sharp turn to the right demands careful selection. Those who take the

obvious and more promising-looking way to the left, as so many have done to their cost, especially at night-time, travel to Bowness on Windermere by Crook. It is a crooked way indeed for any who darkly stray on this hilly by-way. The way to Bowness by the main road is half a mile longer—nine and a half miles—but quicker in point of time.

The highway fully justifies its name when the lofty slope of Rather Heath is surmounted, and mountains, great and small, fill in the forward horizon. Kentmere Vale, with the tardy-flowing Kent winding its richly wooded way through the open vale, is pleasing to the eye despite the almost shapeless bareness of its surrounding fells. Then the road swings downwards; lofty banks of brown and golden gorse on the one hand, and the briar-trailed hedges of the larchy coppice on the other, confine the prospect. The mountain air sweeps past one temptingly and the “straights” call for speed. Yet discretion must not be cast to the winds. A sudden turn reveals the railway crossing, and its steely defences are stubborn facts that far too often bid one discourse with the leisurely gateman.

The village of Staveley itself is scarcely half a mile beyond. It is not a pretty place, and less so to the motorist by reason of the 10-mile speed-limit standards which obtrude on the view. The Staveley bobbin mill industry has also a practical interest for the road traveller, for cumbersome timber-wagons are encountered heavily laden with huge trees that frequently project to rearwards

thirty or forty feet, or even farther. In a deceptive evening light these are a real danger and at all times a force to be reckoned with, for their side swing in cornering is far-reaching. Not very long ago the occupants of a covered car found themselves roughly robbed of their shelter: most of the hood and its fittings went swinging away loftily on the end of the swaying timber-wagon. Even so they were extremely fortunate to escape personal damage. The quietness of the modern car makes it an extremely dangerous proceeding to attempt to overtake this traffic without certainty that the men in charge are aware of the car's presence.

At the head of the narrow street of Staveley the way to Lakeland proper turns to the left over the bridge, and after rounding a hidden corner the houses are gradually left behind. Soon comes the dangerous corner at Ings, with its deserted-looking church on the one side and the busy little inn on the other. Few who travel often that way are without visions of plunging horses and red-faced carters, with tankards in hand, dashing wildly from the open door. Calamities have occurred and there are nowadays fewer "callers" at Ings. Thus again the all-conquering motor asserts itself—this time as a temperance advocate.

Beyond Ings, thanks to the new road, there is a straightforward, upward run to the crest of Bannerigg—a hill of a tragic past, and doubtless of a tragic future unless the lower turn be altered

radically. In the earlier days of cycling it was a notorious spot, and there was much agitation for the erection of a net to catch far-flung mortals who, instead of taking the turn, took toll of the farmer's crop over the low stone wall.

The lower part of Bannerigg Brow is undoubtedly a dangerous spot upon which to meet up-coming traffic, especially that of the speedy variety; it behoves one to remember well the rule of the road thereon. Then in front there is an exhilarating dash up the front of Alice How, and with surprising suddenness the expanse of Lake Windermere lies below, with its girdle of mountains and central array of tree-fringed islands. The broadening head of the lake is encircled by rugged mountain giants; its foot reposes 'midst the calm shelter of wooded slopes slowly slanting southwards to the region of railways and pastoral fruitfulness.

But it is only a passing glimpse of beauty. Soon the foreground of railway ugliness smites eye and ear arrestingly, and one glides slowly down the sinuous steep into Windermere village, aggressively modern, wealthy, and well adapted to its surroundings. It is wild nature tamed by the dressing of the landscape gardener; the architectural art of man is here so unobtrusive as to be almost unnoticeable.

Close by the station the road on the left winds downwards in one and a half miles to Bowness—the port of Windermere—but the main trunk road leads straight on, gradually trending lake-shore-

wards and dropping over 300 feet in the ensuing three miles.

The village of Windermere itself has few attractions, but the luxurious woods on the right, where huge elms and spreading sycamores mask the heights of Orrest Head, are part of the Ellera Estate to which Christopher North came with his young wife in 1811. There may still be seen the wonderful sycamore so well described by the great man—great of muscular power as well as mind, for he was one of the earliest to range the wildest, loftiest recesses of the surrounding mountains. A sight of the little shady cottage recalls his words so aptly descriptive of many a one to-day: "Never in this well-wooded world, not even in the days of the Druids, could there have been such another tree! It would be easier to imagine two Shakespeares. Yet I have heard people say it is far from being a large tree. A small one it cannot be with a house in its shadow—an unawakened house that looks as if it were dreaming. True, 'tis but a cottage, a Westmorland cottage. But then it has several roofs, shelving away there in the lustre of the loveliest lichens; each roof with its own assortment of doves and pigeons preening their pinions in the morning pleasance. O, sweetest and shadiest of all sycamores, we love thee beyond all other trees!"

The motorist will scarcely echo the latter sentiment when, as is more than likely, he feels his way down the slimy road whose foliage-sheltered surface is prone to cause "skiddy" surprises, drive

he never so carefully. Windermere Church is apt to be missed near the foot of the village, for it stands on the left side opposite an engaging turn of the road. Half a mile from the station the cross-roads at Cook's Corner—a place notorious in police-trapping seasons—is passed. The corner derives its name from an ancient farm-house which has now disappeared. Its famous old fire-place was one of the local sights, with its quaint chimney corners, where the good-man of the house and his wife had to sit with shawls over their shoulders to protect them from the soot that the rain brought down.

Cook's Corner is to-day of importance to the motorist because on the right there turns off the easiest and best road up to Kirkstone Pass, and then over to Ullswater. The turn to the left leads by the Rayrigg road to Bowness. For those with little time to spare who wish to see the most easily attained extensive view of Windermere's beauties, it is well to drive along this side road for a couple of hundred yards or so to the seat-crowned viewpoint above Miller Brow. There is no need to dismount, for, according to Christopher North, "You soon find yourself on a terrace to which there was nothing to compare in the hanging gardens of Babylon. There is the widest breadth of water, the richest foreground of wood, and the most magnificent background of mountains, not only in Westmorland but, believe us, in all the world."

In the north-west, across the restless span of blue, rise the twin peaks of Langdale—always

unmistakable landmarks hereabouts. To the left of them Great Gable peeps over the wide gap before the graceful mass of Bowfell assumes apparent place of honour. Yet in actual loftiness it is far from supreme, for, farther to the left again, Scawfell Pike peeps furtively, to remind one that England's highest peak must have place in this grandest prospect. Then farther away to the south, Crinkle Crag's treble crinkled crest leads the eye along to the lowest point in the westerly skyline, where Wrynose Gap and Pass give hope some day of a west trunk road to the seaward lakes. Then bulky Wetherlam and Conistone Old Man appear over the nearer heights of Claife, foliage-feathered to the water's brink. The sinking skyline to the south diverts attention to the nearer foreground, where the flag-staffed eminence of Adelaide Hill is a reminder that this commemoration of Queen Adelaide's visit in 1840 became one's own personal property through the efforts of the National Trust.

The main road beyond Cook's Corner follows through an avenue of stately trees until, ere Troutbeck Bridge is gained, the open meadows of Calgarth Estate afford wider outlook. The weather-stained, ivy-covered house on the margin of the lake is Old Calgarth Hall—originally Calfgarth—perchance a suitable name considering the calf-like innocence with which some modern natives still believe the old stories thereabout. Spectres appear occasionally and the two indestructible skulls are still in existence.

The legend runs that these skulls belonged to two poor old retainers who were unjustly charged with robbery, condemned, and executed. "To perpetuate their innocence, their skulls were made indestructible, and although they have been buried, burned, powdered, and dispersed in the wind, they remain perfect unto this day."

The run down the hill to Troutbeck Bridge puts Calgarth out of sight and out of mind. Then having passed some obtrusively new mansions, and meanwhile outflanking some extended walls of lofty ugliness, wooded Wansfell appears in front as the predominating feature, and on the extreme right the ulterior fastnesses of Troutbeck Valley sink their grandeur.

Exigencies of civilization press heavily hereabouts. A signboard asks one to "Drive slowly past the Hotel," and Low Wood, open to a beautiful lakeward prospect, lies open also to the dust of the heedless hurrier. The hotel is a world-famous haunt of honeymoon travellers, on whom its glorious views are surely wasted, for are not such mortals prone to see little beyond their own near foreground? But the Low Wood corner of the lake is one in which to linger. The road at first skirts close by the water's margin, where marsh marigolds and globe flowers gild the grey pebbly beach, and where flowery banks scarce hide the bared roots of beech and oak that, snake-like, crawl for covering in the watery depths. Screens of budding beech overhang the dark, motionless mere, then, breeze-swayed, their branches

dip and kiss the surface into rippling smiles of light 'midst which the darkly purple Pikes of Langdale reflect their gloom. Then out on the point where the alders sigh in the breeze the lake is stirred to a silvery gleam, and the sedgy shore is awash with the waves from some motor craft that seeks its sheltering home in the quiet bay.

Soon the lakeward view is foliage-hidden, and Dove Nest on the opposite side, snugly hidden under the leafy shade of Wansfell, attracts attention with its garden front ablaze with golden poppies. It was here before the days of motors that Mrs. Hemans sought repose in her declining years. In one of her letters she said in words that aptly describe the scene: "I am writing to you from an old-fashioned alcove in the little garden, round which the sweetbriar and the rose-trees have completely run wild; and I look down from it up lovely Windermere, which seems at this moment even like unto another sky, so truly is every summer cloud and tint of azure pictured in its transparent mirror. I am so delighted with the spot that I scarcely know how I shall leave it. The situation is one of the deepest retirement; but the bright lake before me, with its fairy barks and sails glancing like things of life over its blue water, prevents the solitude from being overshadowed by anything like sadness."

From Low Wood across to Pull Wyke Bay, where Wray Castle near by flaunts its modernity, is the widest stretch of Windermere, and when the road leaves the lake shore again to mount over

a projecting point, there is a pleasing backward view over the expanse of waters. In front and to the right the Vale of Ambleside now opens out, grandly surrounded ahead by the lofty, valley-furrowed masses of Red Screes, Scandale Fells, and Fairfield.

Little more is seen of the lake shore on the side of approach, for the Waterhead Bay is now almost encircled by buildings. When the Waterhead steamer station appears, a branch road to the left is also revealed which enables Langdale or Coniston to be gained without entering Ambleside. This sweeps round the head of the lake, skirting closely the Dictis Field, wherein lie the remains of the most easily accessible Roman station in the district. In Camden's time it was "the carcase of an ancient city with great ruins of walls still remaining scattered about."

Of course these features have departed, and until recent times the ploughed field with its curious depressions attracted little notice. Yet there have been many valuable finds, and some gold coins from there were presented by a local family to the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Later explorations have revealed to the more careless passer-by that this potato field contains things out of the ordinary. Doubtless, as Wordsworth suggested long ago, the *castrum* was established as a check on the Passes of Dunmail, Langdale, Kirkstone, and Wrynose, for out of these wild mountain fastnesses the savage Brigantes swept down upon the outposts of civilization.

But one must not wander in these Roman by-ways. Our main road slants easily upwards from Waterhead to Ambleside, where narrow streets and awkward corners almost justify the newly established speed limit. Where the road reaches its highest point in the upper part of the town, there is a turn to the left of surprising suddenness should traffic be encountered thereon. Some may prefer to linger and alight in the hotel-encircled square straight ahead to visit Stock Ghyll Force, a famous fall half a mile's walk away amidst a wondrous wooded glen.

In leaving Ambleside, after negotiating the upper turn previously mentioned, the narrow road to the right should be noticed; this leads up to the steep ascent of Kirkstone Pass. The "highest house" is only three miles away, most of which distance entails real "motor-mountaineering." Ere the motorist leaves Ambleside the picturesque peep of the old mill on the right should not be missed, for the highway runs over the bridge that affords the best view-point; nor should the curious old Bridge House be overlooked. This is only a few yards farther, and on the opposite side of the road. Also on the same side, and just before the 10-mile speed-limit standard is passed, there is an open view towards the Knoll, the one-time home of Harriet Martineau.

Then the motorist is soon out again in the fresh air of the meadows, northward bound into the heart of the mountains. On the left gnarled crags push forth from the grassy front of Loughrigg, and

in front the blunt, shattered nose of Nab Scar shows a fine contour of storm-weathered rock, where cling sturdy pines and mountain ash inured to life on barest sustenance. There are distant peeps of Rydal Mount, Wordsworth's home from 1813 to 1850, away up on the right, but those who wish for closer sight must quit their car close by Rydal Church, where lofty beeches catch that song of the breezes seldom unheard in the narrows of the dale.

The Rydal Falls,—the upper and the lower,—though situated in private grounds, can also be visited from this stopping-place. A guide may be found in one of the little cottages at the foot of the hill. Both falls are somewhat artificial, but the upper cascade is the less spoilt of the two—in fact, with its single plunge of nearly sixty feet, the sight must rank as one of the finest of its kind in the district.

From the same stopping-place near Rydal Church some may care to return along the Ambleside road for two hundred yards or so to the Pelter Bridge, which spans the rippling Rothay and gives access to Fox How. This was the home of Dr. Arnold of Rugby fame from 1833 to 1841. In the former year the house was built for him “‘midst a poet's dream of river, valley, copse, and lawn,” and after his last foreign tour he wrote: “No scene in Italy appeared in my eyes comparable to it.” In later years Matthew Arnold showed that he had inherited his father's worship for Fox How and its beautiful surroundings.

Other wanderers may prefer to stroll a few yards along the main Rydal road to a narrow foot-path on the left which leads across a wooden bridge to the foot of Rydal Water. It is one of the prettiest scenes in Lakeland, rich in colour-luxury for the artist, and beautiful of balanced outline for the camera man. Reedy shores, graceful birches, grassy glades, and grey crags tree-fringed even to the summit skyline, form a perfect setting for the smallest yet prettiest of the lakes. It is scarcely now more than a mile's walk through beech woods on the west side of Rydal Water to rejoin the main road at the head of the lake. Every few yards reveal a new form of loveliness. This tiny, mere-filled foldlet in the hills is truly a microcosm of beauty; compared with the greater valleys it is as a sonnet to poetry—the compass small, but the sense and feeling complete.

But in these days of crowded highways the ordinary road-traveller who fails to make the divergence on foot sees little of these charms of Rydal. He recalls, more probably, the sudden revelation of beauty beyond the first turn after leaving Rydal Church, and the o'er-arching roof of greenery—

“Joined in one solemn and capacious grove
Huge trunks, and each portentous trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine.”

Then fiercely serpentine too is his course when quick, 'midst a cloud of dust, comes some modern greyhound of the road far flung athwart the highway by too close-cut “cornering.” True,



RYDAL WATER FROM THE FOOT OF THE LAKE

the driver of his own car has small chance of enjoying the surrounding charms of this busiest bit of roadway in Lakeland. There is scarcely time to notice, almost within reach on the left hand, the dust-draped rock whose well-worn steps so often led Wordsworth up to muse on Nature's secrets.

Should the motor-wanderer choose to stay his course on the crest of the ensuing hill to revel in that backward outlook towards Wansfell, doubly beautiful if mere-mirrored in the evening calm, his pleasure is short-lived. Truly the world is too much with us. With a whirr and a screeching of brakes a great car flings to a standstill on the hill-top.

"Anything the matter?" comes the hasty question.

"Not with me, thank you!" is the answer, and away fly the be-goggled tourists, utterly unaware of any sarcasm in the reply. Every few minutes the experience may be repeated, and undoubtedly the inquiries are most kindly meant. Yet is it not a reflection on motoring habits that a wayside halt at once suggests the idea that something must be wrong? No flowery dell, or scene of fairy beauty far beyond the powers of human description would seem to justify the cessation of the motorist's onward rush. Such is the modern idea. Surely it would be better for the world in general were speed to become a secondary matter between Ambleside and Grasmere, the most romantic and beautiful stretch of busy highway in England.

About midway along the shore of Rydal Water, and opposite the island where herons built and multiplied before the days of open exhausts, the small, quaintly porched cottage of the Nab is passed only a few inches away on the right-hand side of the road.

It was here that Hartley Coleridge—the Peter Pan of the Lake-country poets—lived from 1838 to 1849. “Li’le Hartley” was the most beloved locally of all his great compeers; every heart, old and young, in the quiet dales warmed to him whose “crack” always “had a laugh in it,” and who had kept “a young lamb’s heart among the full-grown flocks.” Whether consorting with Wordsworth, or reeling off his poetry for a “pint” at Low Wood, or cheering the hard, lonesome lives of the dalesmen, the “little boy-man” was always welcome. His baneful weakness was little thought of in those days; truly, in local wording, “he was his own fadder’s son!”

Beyond Nab Cottage the way bends sharply away into the shadow of the steeps, and Grasmere-wards. The two old roads over the hills to Grasmere are soon passed. The first and highest was named by Dr. Arnold “Old Corruption,” the second “Bit-by-Bit Reform,” and the new one by which one travels “Radical Reform.” For once at least motorists may well be thankful for radical reform, because neither of the mountain roads has been planned for tyred wheels, or for any but most expert handlers of the gears. Even the view from the wishing-gate on “Bit-by-Bit Reform” is scarcely

worth the detour, though perhaps an exception might be made in daffodil time. The beautiful open stretch of level on the highway suggests speed, but it is well to be wary, for many know to their cost that lofty "Old Corruption" has afforded a capital signalling-ground for police-trap specialists.

The first view of Grasmere comes suddenly. There is an all-engrossing bend round a rugged, rocky corner, and the man at the wheel at least is well beyond the jaws of the narrow opening before he realizes that the peaceful Vale of Grasmere has been entered. Grassy, tree-clad knolls, bestarred with daisies and celandines, crowd downwards from the lofty heights on the right. Between these and the lake winds the road, moss-walled and almost dustless of surface.

Grasmere is basin-like in form, and to its mile of length adds fully half a mile of breadth, with a single, somewhat quaint-looking island set almost midway on the expanse.

Year by year the few old firs which decorate its grassy plainness pay toll to the winter storms which sweep through the narrow Rydal defile. The old grey cottage has a lonesome look that suggests the thought that the place might have some history, but nothing is known locally. Beautiful as is the view of Grasmere from the highway, that from the quieter road on the west side is altogether grander. It was there that Mrs. Hemans wrote—

“Oh, vale and lake ! within yon mountain urn,
Smiling so tranquilly and yet so deep,
Oft doth your dreamy loveliness return,
Colouring the tender shadows of my sleep
With light Elysian.”

The mountains become more rugged of outline as the motorist draws up towards the head of the lake, and on its farther side, less than midway along its length, the famous hill of Red Bank can be seen, though almost tree-masked, winding up to a hollow in the wooded skyline. At the curve of the road which reveals the Prince of Wales Hotel, with its name to serve as a reminder that the late King Edward once visited Grasmere, the thin white line of Dunmail Raise may be noticed straight ahead slanting upwards to the biggest gap in the surrounding mountain screen. Helm Crag, with its curious, rock-humped crest, is most conspicuous to the left of the Raise, whilst farther still to the left the larch-draped slopes of Silverhow show off this graceful peak to perfection. This was well known in the early days of the guides' race at the world-famous Grasmere Sports ; but Butter Crag, a buttress of Fairfield on the opposite side of the valley, is now the height of ambition for north-country fell-racers.

Town End is the name of the small suburb of Grasmere in close proximity to the Prince of Wales Hotel, and it may be well to halt there a while, for few pass Grasmere without some commune with its poetical past.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAIN TRUNK ROAD (*Continued*)— GRASMERE TO BOTHEL

“For me this land, that sea, these airs, those folk and fields suffice.
What purple Southern pomp can match our changeful Northern
skies,

Black with December snows unshed or pearled with August haze,
The clanging arch of steel-grey March or June’s long lighted
days?”

R. KIPLING

TO the motor-sojourner in Grasmere the call of the heights is irresistible. Dunmail’s mountain gap, ensentinelled by Seat Sandal on the east and Helm Crag on the west, looms persistently in almost every prospect. At the “four road ends” beyond the Prince of Wales Hotel the direct trunk road continues straight ahead, and the village of Grasmere may thus be avoided. But the detour through the latter picturesque and romantic spot involves only an extra distance of half a mile, though hours may easily be spent in the doing. The other road at the divergence of the ways—that to the right—leads in a few yards to Dove Cottage, which was Wordsworth’s first Grasmere home.

Of all the Lake worthies, Wordsworth was the only one born in the district, and in the vales of Grasmere and Rydal most of his life was spent—at Dove Cottage from 1799 to 1808, Allan Bank

from 1808 to 1811, Grasmere Rectory from 1811 to 1813, and finally at Rydal Mount from 1813 to 1850. But the poet's connexion with Dove Cottage is the most fascinating part of his career. The pretty little building stands by the old Ambleside-Grasmere road, and was in earlier days an inn, known as the Dove and Olive Bough. It is now national property, and is the object of a world-wide pilgrimage. With numerous invaluable pictures, manuscripts, and other poetical features of great interest, the interior of the cottage is apt to monopolize the motoring visitor's attention; but the fern- and flower-dressed back garden, with its orchard and well, should not be forgotten. To many these are the most delightful details of all, for were they not the actual handwork of Wordsworth and his gentle sister Dorothy?

De Quincey came to live at Dove Cottage in 1809, and during the ensuing few years the Lake-country array of literary stars, then in full ascendancy, hovered much around Dove Cottage. Southey and Coleridge were constant visitors from Keswick, Shelley was also in the same district in 1811, the Wordsworths were at Grasmere, Professor Wilson made nothing of the walk from Elleray, and on the way he often endured the company of Calgarth's pompous literary magnate, Bishop Watson. De Quincey has left stirring stories of those days.

And then the motorist may journey on to Grasmere Church, ugly of exterior, but strangely beautiful inside, especially roofwards, "with naked

rafters intricately crossed " supporting the oaken superstructure. Then out in the shadow of the hills he may wander to that sombre, sheltered corner where the plain, grey, slate slabs tell their simple story. Soft breezes, mountain-borne, sing 'midst the swaying pinions of the yews with rhythm attuned to Rothay's rippling flow; what sweeter music for our native poets' rest?

The village of Grasmere itself is most remarkable in its confusion of streets—or perchance lanes may be the better word. But with Dunmail Raise in mind, and bonnet turned persistently northwards, the motorist will eventually emerge on the Keswick road, and soon join the main highway just beyond the whitewashed inn known as the Swan. This was a famous and favourite hostelry in the earlier days when the stage coaches changed horses by the bridge. The old landlord here used to tell many a good tale of the local worthies. When Sir Walter Scott visited the Wordsworths, he was not much in love with the plain living and high thinking practised at Dove Cottage. Truly, their board, presided over by the necessarily careful and thrifty Dorothy, was humble to a degree. By dint of much tact, young Scott managed to visit the Swan every day unknown to his friends. But one morning when he, Wordsworth, and Southey were setting out on ponies to climb the "brow of the mighty Helvellyn," the simple-minded host cried out to Scott—

"Why, sir! ye've come varra soon for yer glass teh-day!"

It was an awkward and ill-timed revelation, yet Wordsworth took matters in good part, and Scott's wonderful poem shows that on his part the embarrassment must have been only temporary.

With engine attuned to this mountain air and gears adapted to the slopes, Dunmail Raise is altogether a fascinating hill. Beyond the Swan Hotel the power beneath one recks little of the rise, but above the corner at the Traveller's Rest, a treacherous spot where creeping children sometimes make the highway their nursery, the gradient may be felt after the enforced control of speed on the turn. At the top of this rise there is a sharp swerve to the left across the bridge over Tongue Ghyll; a few yards farther on, the by-road comes in on the left from Easedale for those who have been tempted to visit this pretty side-valley from Grasmere. The main road now dips slightly before the continuous climb up the Raise begins. A sudden corner somewhat curbs the top gear dash, and by the time the little white cottage at Town Head is passed lower speeds will probably enable even the man at the wheel to look around.

In the depths of the defile, far below, the Rothay has thus far kept one company, but now it winds away high up to its heathery birthplace in the wilds between Helm Crag and Steel Fell. The latter is the mountain of extended front that forms the westerly wall of the upper reaches of the Raise. But the curious crest of Helm Crag will probably ere this have attracted attention. Below the white cottage the summit rocks assume the



UP DUNMAIL RAISE—THE MAIN TRUNK ROAD

GRASMERE IS SEEN BELOW ON THE LEFT, AND HELM CRAG, CROWNED WITH THE "LION AND THE LAMB," ON THE RIGHT

shape of an organ with the thin figure of the player bending stiffly over the keyboard. Then as one mounts the two succeeding steep pitches of the hill the shape changes rapidly, until at a point where the wall on the left ceases and the open fell side is gained, the "organ" becomes the "astrologer" rock, and on the left cowers a suppliant female. These are the

"Dread pair that, spite of wind and weather,
Still sit upon Helm Crag together."

This was Wordsworth's idea, but "the astrologer-sage Sidrophel," with "no one but the Ancient Woman," never seems to have attracted general notice. It is just below the crest of the hill and during the steepest portion of the whole ascent that the more popular notion of the lion and the lamb appears to advantage. The rocks keep their well-known and unmistakable outline almost to the highest point of the Raise. This is 780 feet above the sea-level, and 572 feet above Grasmere.

Though the backward view into the richly verdured vale is always beautiful, the upper reaches of the pass are bleak and almost featureless. However, to geologists the splendid array of moraines on the left may arouse interest. Years ago archæologists used to argue much concerning the great heap of stones just beyond the bridge over the Raise Beck that forms the boundary between Cumberland and Westmorland. In the earlier days the natives knew very well that the heap was, like numerous others in various mountainous parts of the district, simply stones gathered from

the surrounding intakes to improve the land for pasturage and in some cases prepare it for the plough. In these sentimental days, the theory of King Dunmail's grave seems absolutely accepted, and innumerable writers have augmented the popular idea. The refuse heap now ranks almost as a national monument. It will never again be used or required for road-making; the splendidly efficient ideas of the Manchester Corporation on this point have been evolved on different lines.

Such may be the motorist's thoughts as he glides swiftly down the Cumberland side of the pass, with the great city's property underneath and all around. Thirlmere gleams distantly as yet, with the shapely blue peak of Skiddaw rising far above and beyond the lake's encircling heights. In a few minutes the motorist will have sped downwards almost to the level of the water, and passed beyond the branching curve of the new road on the left that leads along the west side of the valley.

It will be well to return to this wonderful road later: it is the way of the wanderer; that which is now followed on the east side of the lake is the course of the speed man. It is the shortest and quickest route to Keswick. Wythburn, with its typical Cumbrian church and accompanying inn, has scarce attraction enough to stay one's swiftness. The keen air of the 600-foot level rushes joyously past as we sweep onwards across the rugged glacis of Helvellyn. On the left, the larch-surrounded

straining-well, where the 95-mile aqueduct to Manchester begins, is soon passed.

Three hundred yards or so farther, amongst a group of young firs round the next curve and on the opposite side of the road, stands the curious "rock of names." It formerly stood close to the margin of the lake, but the raising of the water's level necessitated its removal to its present position on the little knoll above the road. The poets made the original rock their meeting-place, and amongst others the initials of Wordsworth, Southey, and John Wilson can be distinguished.

The road runs too closely under Helvellyn to allow a proper appreciation of our second highest mountain's grandeur. Its 3000 feet of height are not apparent, and the six miles of massive frontage are never seen. But there is an ever-changing array of craggy, wood-draped beauty on the opposite side of the lake. Fisher Crag, almost midway down the valley, holds pride of place, whilst farther north Raven Crag, rugged yet beautiful, rivets attention by reason of its bizarre outline. Some see in it the profile of a famous statesman, which is scarcely complimentary, because a genial old coachman used to amuse his passengers by the puzzle, "Find the nigger's face!"

At the top of Park Brow the little hostelry at Thirlspot appears far away below in the fertile hollow that stretches on into the narrow defile of St. John's Vale. The furrowed front of Blencathra, or Saddleback, towers grandly in the distance. By comparison, the Castle Rock, immortalized by Scott

in the *Bridal of Triermain*, seems, as a disappointed American once said, "simply a piffling pimple."

Yet the scene as a whole is remarkably impressive, and should the motorist relinquish the speed mood a mile beyond Thirlspot to turn down the narrow side-valley of St. John, he may discover some excuse for Scott's imaginative and florid poesy. This way to the Keswick valley possesses much more beauty and interest than the ordinary route. The completion of the road improvements at the head of the vale allows Threlkeld to be avoided by turning to the left two miles short of the latter village, thus gaining the Penrith and Keswick highway by way of Shundraw.

If the main trunk road from Thirlspot be preferred, the way continues over Smeathwaite Bridge, beyond which a steady rise over a heathery spur leads down into the Vale of Naddle. At the foot of the ensuing downward grade the new road from the west side of Thirlmere appears.

Reverting to the opposite end of this road near Wythburn the first general feature of interest to note is its five-mile continuity of levelness. Away from this valley half a mile of level road is practically unknown in central Lakeland. The surface is excellent, and throughout its length evidences of skilful and expensive construction are constantly noticed. The whole cost of nearly £30,000 was borne by the Manchester Corporation, and the work was undertaken as a form of acknowledgment for the withdrawal of local opposition to the con-

version of Thirlmere into a reservoir. So artistically and thoughtfully has this been done that few would recognize the fact unless they knew the lake previously in its double form of Leathes Water and Wythburn Water.

The surface of the lakes was originally 533 feet above sea-level, thus ranking in height next to Haweswater, which is the loftiest of the lakes. It has now been raised nearly the full height of 50 feet above the original elevation, and to augment the natural embankment at the north end of the valley a splendid dam has been built. This is a fine piece of engineering work, 260 yards in length, and 100 feet from the foundation to the splendid 16-foot motor-way that runs along its summit.

The beginning of the new road at the Wythburn end promises nothing out of the ordinary until the three curiously named farm-steads of Stenkin, "West End," and "The City" are passed. Soon man's conquest over Nature is evident, but it has taken more than faith to move mountains in this case. Huge cuttings have been blasted through the solid rock, and the granite walls reverberate with the hum of the modern chariot, where only a few years previously no wheeled thing but a wheelbarrow could travel happily. The motorist soon realizes what wonderful and hitherto unknown views this new road provides. This fact is thrust upon him throughout its length. Then the thunder of the white-foamed torrent of Dob Ghyll is a reminder that Harrop Tarn is hidden in a rocky, heron-haunted hollow overhead. It is a typical Cumbrian

tarn, and lies less than half an hour's walk away up the juniper-draped slopes.

The way now curves out upon a rocky point where stately Scotch firs grip precarious hold on the solid slabs of rock—a foreground that is in keeping with the huge bulk of Helvellyn, which here assumes its true proportions, rising in wild abruptness from the opposite lake-shore. The curious rocky promontories thrust forth into the gloomy depths recall a local event which happened hereabouts many years ago. The rock-projection called “Clark’s Leap” is now under the water, but the origin of the curious name will never be forgotten locally.

A dalesman of that name was so overcome with his marital troubles that, acting on the advice of his worse half, he decided to end his existence by throwing himself into the lake from the top of the impending rock. A well-known authority had the story from the wife herself in 1789. This lady objected to “hanging as being too painful, and to shooting because he might not be killed outright, but encouraged the drowning theory to the extent of helping him to select the spot.” The crag chosen had plenty of deep water below; moreover, it allowed a run to be taken, thus preventing any premature damage through striking the lower rocks. The wife “stayed long enough to make sure of the actual drowning, and then returned fully satisfied that she had done her duty in giving him the best advice that lay in her power.”

The road now cuts along the face of the

mountain, the lake lying directly below, and young larch plantations rising overhead in a mellow screen of greenery, unbroken except where hurrying little streams fling downwards and beneath the road to contribute their quota of moisture for Manchester. A short experimental section of tarred road is shortly under wheel. After three years' use the wear and tear seems unappreciable, but for the sake of the purity of the water below it is scarcely likely that more of this construction will be undertaken. So far as the pleasure of motoring is concerned it is unnecessary, for, in the almost complete absence of horse-traffic, dust is here practically non-existent. Moreover, the high speed that causes this evil is not advisable on such a motor-way. Disregarding the æsthetic side of the question, the remarkably sudden and dangerous corners, often on the brink or under the shadow of the precipice, prohibit quick travelling.

The huge mass of Rough Crag now obtrudes itself in front, and the way skirts its rocky foundations sinuously ; it is here that the cuttings through the solid crags are most impressive. Then a straight stretch runs out on to a lofty promontory, and there is just time to notice the alluringly expansive forward prospect before one swings round a sweeping curve under the savage recesses of Rough Crag's northerly precipice. It is the wildest bit of the road.

There is much of varying interest hereabouts. Just after rounding the corner a curious dark rift may be noticed high up in the face of the confronting mountain, which looks towards Helvellyn.

This is the remarkable cave called Dob's Hole. It was only noticed a few years ago, and below the entrance were found several old coins and a pair of Elizabethan bronze bracelets. How these reached the spot is a mystery, and a climb up into the cave lends no enlightenment. The height above the road is about 320 feet, and the final three or four yards entail some mild rock-climbing. The cave apparently was long ago a mining level, and now it extends back into the solid body-rock of the mountain for nearly 30 yards. There is a height of about five feet, and aided by a motor side-lamp the interior may be explored in comfort.

The adjacent mountain-side is wondrously rich in botanical features, rare and otherwise. At Launchy Ghyll, which possesses one of the grandest arrays of waterfalls in the district, this fact is obvious, and few will fail to notice the thick carpets of stag's-horn moss. In the upper part of the ghyll it is possible to stand spray-sprinkled under a 100-foot waterfall and watch the torrent plunge into a narrow gorge invisible below in its length of 30 yards. Lofty impassable cliffs rise on both sides. At the lower end the water rushes forth and downwards over the brink of the great brown rocks in a graceful ribbon of silvery moisture.

Then up to the left of the ghyll, and conspicuous on the skyline during the stroll up the right-hand side of the gorge, a unique perched boulder may be noticed. It is probably the most striking specimen of a glacier-borne rock in the country. Yet, with all its interests and delights, Launchy



THE NORTHWARD VIEW OF THIRLMERE FROM ABOVE ROUGH CRAG

SKIDDAW IS SEEN PEEPING OVER THE SHOULDER OF RAVEN CRAG ON THE LEFT. THE VALE OF ST. JOHN LIES ON THE EXTREME RIGHT, WITH SADDLEBACK RISING BEYOND IT

Ghyll is practically unknown, though the road passes within a few minutes' walk of it. In Switzerland or the Isle of Man it would be popularized at a price.

The road, continuously beautiful in its setting of rock and woodland, now carries one onwards in longer sweeps, where speed and safety are not so much at variance, except perhaps at the end of the beechy avenue by Armboth House. This latter old-fashioned building indicates the position of the ancient Roman causeway or bridge, which formerly spanned the middle of Thirlmere. This interesting relic is now, of course, under water, but on the fells above Armboth there are still numerous remains of the camps used by the ancient Britons, an entirely new example being discovered early this year. The most famous and largest of this series is situated above and behind Raven Crag, away to the north of Armboth. On the mountain just above this latter place there is also an old barter-stone. A still finer specimen was situated by the lake-shore in the Deer Garth, south of the Armboth Farm. Unfortunately, this is only visible when the lake surface is low, but before the raising of the water, and until comparatively recent times, it was used as a bartering-stone by the natives of this and the adjoining valleys. Then, besides these attractions, Armboth has its ghosts, and the legend of the Calgarth skulls that now and again visit therein.

But the open road has a pleasanter feel. On one speeds, with backward views that show Helvellyn's

beauty and grandeur better than those from any other vantage-point in the district. In the foreground is a slanting sunny meadow where may be found one of the rarest of wild flowers, the small Alpine gentian, whose wondrous blue is only matched by that of the firmament. Then an obviously awkward curve calls for curbed progress. Around the corner comes the most arresting sight of all—not an oncoming car cornering furiously on the wrong side, but simply a sudden revelation of Raven Crag's precipitous greatness. Whether seen in twilight gloom or in full blaze of sunlight, the scene is vastly impressive. In spring-time, when the emerald sheen but sparsely hides the purple savagery of the rocks, the splendid crag is all-magnificent.

Speed is slackened almost instinctively. Then, if the day be calm, a curious rasping note may break the overhead stillness; it is the young ravens in their home under the crag's o'ertopping lintel. The quick eye may also discern the peregrines, now wheeling overhead, and anon darting with cruel swiftness upon the heathery steeps where wild life frolics unsuspectingly in the sunlight. The gathering of nearly every specimen of British wild bird of prey in the Thirlmere "sanctuary" adds a new and picturesque interest to the vale. The hawks have realized instinctively that here there is safety; their preservation is carefully watched. Elsewhere in Lakeland these beautiful birds are destroyed mercilessly.

Another detail of interest to Nature lovers

hereabouts will be the sight of numerous nesting-boxes affixed to the trees; these are placed to encourage the increase of the tits, for these have been found to be the deadliest enemy of the saw-fly larvæ that threatened to destroy thousands of the larch trees, young and old. The presence of this pest also explains the constant sight of tar-soaked straw plaits wrapped round the trunks of many of the larches in the Thirlmere area. Windstorms flung the larvæ off the trees, but until the discovery of the tar plait they crept up and back again to their homes. Round the foot of some of the tree-trunks thousands of the dead lie scattered. The discovery and practice of these two methods of extinction are gradually overcoming the pest. The lavish afforestation of the Thirlmere area bids fair to revive the glories of a past decade. In those days, according to Wordsworth, a squirrel might travel from Wythburn to Keswick without touching the ground. Ere long a similar non-stop run may be possible.

A glimpse of the embankment on the right, trim and tidy with its castellated tower, stirs the thought that man's handiwork protrudes somewhat harshly in this wild setting. Then the branch road, which crosses the embankment's crest to the east side of the valley and the Vale of St. John, is passed, and the way ahead sinks downwards into the Vale of Naddle. Hereabouts in a morning light the Castle Rock stands boldly forth from Helvellyn's bulkiness. Far below, the outflow from Thirlmere, freed from its artificiality, winds

waveringly 'midst the meadows as though afraid to plunge into the rocky jaws of the distant Vale of St. John. To the geologist the sight suggests curious evidences of natural alteration. Instead of taking the direct way Keswick-wards, the river turns away and flows down the farther valley. Also, just as the road enters the Vale of Naddle through the last of the great rock cuttings, striking signs of tremendous ice-action may be noticed on the left—a jutting rock is remarkably undercut and polished.

Half a mile farther on, the main trunk road is joined. This rises over a heathery hillock and follows the fringe of Shoulthwaite Moss, whose sombre, peaty mantle is lightened by straggling birches and crimsoned patches of loosestrife, vivid near at hand, but distantly, mere filmy clouds of pervasive pinkness. Many a pleasant farm-stead looks down upon the roadway. Then, two miles farther on, one mounts Nest Brow to Castlerigg, whose local name is Castrigg, and peaky Saddleback in front rises in the outline which its name suggests. As the car swings up out of the Naddle depths, distant Skiddaw peeps over the steep hill's crest ahead, soon to be revealed in full array when the way leads over the top of the final, lofty levels.

Then down into the Vale of Derwent one glides silently, and be it a sunset evening the motor-wanderer may well halt on the curve of the hill. There, far below, the gem-like lake lies revealed, bejewelled with islands and mountain-encompassed. Bassenthwaite Water in the north-west lies open

to the orange gleam of sunset, and Skiddaw, the northerly valley-guard, flings back the music of the "Lake Cathedral" bells, which pour forth a very cascade of music through the vale—now echoing faintly in the distant, meadowy woodlands, and anon swelling upward sweetly as the evening breezes flicker the larch tassels overhead. Then beyond the tapering ridges of Grisedale Pike the gloom of a cloudy twilight creeps along the heights. It spreads from Grasmoor o'er Red Pike to the southerly sentinels, where, in the last rosy gleam, Great Gable and Scawfell Pike o'ertop a host of vassal underlings.

The brakes are released, and one speeds valleyward, with a white cottage in front dividing the ways. That on the left is the quicker of the two, but exceedingly steep and not approved of those who sympathize with motor machinery, and reserve brake-power for times of necessity. The road on the right descends in gentler mood. There is one awkward, right-angled corner where it joins the highway from Penrith, and soon the Greta neighbours the highway and flows alongside into the busy town of Keswick.

Its guide-book name, "the Metropolis of Lakeland," betokens all modern luxuries, and the town itself calls for small mention. Passing motorists may remember most its narrow corners, and the quaint Town Hall with a clock which has always treated the precise time of day with unconcern. So-called modern improvements have robbed the place of some beauty and interest; the picturesque

old market fountain has gone, and hedges of hawthorn glory, the growth of generations, are hurriedly replaced by iron rails and city pavements. The old Town Hall has often been threatened with improvement out of existence, but it still remains, and in its shadow there is the paved market square where motorists are at present allowed to leave their cars during a passing inspection of the very ordinary town.

Those who wish to make closer acquaintance with Derwentwater and to see the prettiest bit of lake-shore road in the district should turn doubly round to the left in the market square, and about a hundred yards farther bend sharply to the right. Were the latter turn neglected, the road would lead onwards to Lodore and into the heart of Borrowdale. Motors are not allowed beyond the boat-station, but the end of Friars' Crag should be visited on foot, and the return to the town and the main highway must be made the same way.

As one follows this latter through the market square and northwards down the main street, the houses in straight array suggest ideas of a manufacturing town. They are remnants of a flourishing past in this respect. The woollen trade has gone despite the "lucky rune" last heard of in front of one of the pencil-mills :—

"May God Almighty grant his aid
To Keswick and its woollen trade."

The gold and silver mines in Newlands and the plumbago mines in Borrowdale no longer exist,

and better thus, if there is any truth in the remarks of an early writer who said, "The poorer inhabitants of Keswick subsist chiefly by stealing or clandestinely buying of those that steal the black-lead, which they sell to Jews or other hawkers."

That Cumberland lead-pencils are still made, though not of Borrowdale lead, is evident by the two pencil-mills on each side of the roadway just before one rises over the narrow hog-back bridge across the Greta at the end of the town. From this same spot there is a peep of Greta Hall away up on a tree-covered knoll on the right. This was Southey's home from 1803 to 1843.

Above a hundred yards beyond the bridge the broad, important-looking road straight ahead is avoided, and a somewhat sharp and surprising turn to the right is followed. A few miles farther and the mile-posts will begin to tell the motorist that he is on the Carlisle highway. It is the continuation of the route followed by those northward-bound who wish to include a run through Lakeland as part of their journey. The broad road previously referred to, though more circuitous, might be used by those who wish to call at Crosthwaite Church, only a few minutes away, or farther on to see the best view of Bassenthwaite Water. This is a somewhat neglected flower in the "Lakeland garland"; it suffers from the overshadowing nearness of Derwentwater—"the Lake Rose."

Yet our present main trunk road provides pleasant prospects of the Lake of Bassenthwaite. Skiddaw, grey-headed and heather-clothed almost

down to the little villages of Applethwaite and Millbeck that hide 'midst the wooded glens, begins to lose his lofty majesty through close approach. The road opens out for speed. At "Crookelty Brig," whose sudden crest the motorist tops vaultingly, the lake ahead gleams beyond the grassy levels. Curve-hidden Dancing Gate Farm can scarce be passed hurriedly, for straying fowls and cattle oft-times dispute the right of way.

The winding road now follows around Skiddaw Dodd and Langside, up hill and down dale, with many a beautiful view meanwhile of Bassenthwaite Water and its westerly mountains. Shortly after passing Bassenthwaite Church a straight incline leads up to the Castle Inn at the four road-ends. To the left the road from the west side of Bassenthwaite Water comes in, that on the right rises to the heights of Ireby, Uldale, and John Peel's country. The way to Carlisle lies straight ahead, and after a short descent a steep curve leads out on to the long incline that culminates above Bewaldeth. Here a branching road on the left, which has quite a good surface, would take one through scenes of pastoral beauty to the deep-set valley of the Derwent and Isel Hall.

The highway soon rises more steeply. It slants up to the open moor, where the columbines hide in the hedges, and the fell-side, yellow with gorse, echoes with the plaintive call of the curlews. An unexpected turn to the left must not be missed. The way straight ahead will only interest motorists who wish to visit Caermote, which overlooks

Bothel and is one of the best ancient British camps in Cumberland.

Then a long half-mile "straight" stretches ahead; it is the first reminder that the Lake district is left behind. The ensuing hill lifts one to the 600-foot level, and the westerly wind may sweep up o'er the moor, laden with the salty savour of the sea. In front the white houses of Bothel gleam through the alder hedgerows. Far behind, the distant ranges lie like a blue cloud low down in the sky, whilst isolated old Skiddaw nearer at hand takes on his shapeliest form—a noble mountain indeed, and, thus seen, worthy of the poet's words:—

"What was the great Parnassus' self to thee,
Mount Skiddaw? In its natural sovereignty
Our British hill is nobler far, he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly."

CHAPTER V

ROUND WINDERMERE—BY HAWKS- HEAD AND CONISTON WATER

“There seemed, from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste,
To the soft flower beneath our feet,
A magic circle traced,
A spirit interfused around,
A thrilling silent life.”

SHELLEY

MARCH had come in like a lion and bade fair to take as little interest in a lamb-like ending as his rocky counterpart on Helm Crag's frosted height. Thus we thought, as Helvellyn's snowy recesses were left behind and Dunmail Raise sped us southwards. The early Easter had come and gone with sudden swiftness. Burly old March, with chill December in his breath, had cleared the roads of holiday traffic ere mid-Easter week was past, and Rydal's highway was as peaceful as the flooded lake which mirrored the snowy summits in the sedgy shallows.

The feasibility of making the circuit of Windermere by the westerly lake-shore road had long occupied the minds of some of us. All the world on wheels traverses the well-known, mansion-fringed highway on the east side of the lake, but the

length of road on the west side seemed unknown to any of the available authorities. Information was as vague as the tragic legend of the Claife Heights, whose darkly wooded crags overlook the romantic roadway. It almost seemed that the ghostly "Crier" had scared off the guide-book insatiates. A motoring friend who had once travelled that western way on a winter's evening had lost the road, but found himself in the lake—more or less. His only remarks were unfit for repetition.

Thus the thirst for knowledge added keenness to our flight as we swung over the Rothay Bridge below Ambleside, and on to the end of Clappersgate. There the left-hand branch led us over the Brathay Bridge, with its ivied buttresses and solemn gloom of underlying waters "black as ash-buds in the front of March." Yet higher up, as the road skirted the river, its deep olive depths were surface-lightened by those mossy islets, with marigolds showing the first flush of yellow 'midst the alder growth.

Soon, over the foothills on the right, there rose the rugged Langdales, ghostly white against the leaden sky, yet beautiful and bold withal. Then on the left the blue-grey light of Windermere broke through the woodlands, and Pull Wyke Bay showed the wide expanse of the lake at its greatest breadth, yet little over a mile in all. The important road on the right was avoided; it would have led to Coniston by the usual coaching route.

A mile away along this road on lonely Pull

Scar the little Barn Gates Inn gave us a passing distant glance, a reminder of its curious local name, "The Drunken Duck." If spelling went by phonography, it would be "Drook'n Dook," and despite quack theories regarding this name, there can be little doubt that the South Lakeland accent meant the last word to be "Duke." It is a pity that the old name has not been used on the maps; for those who lose their way in the neighbouring by-roads, a very common occurrence, will find that local knowledge "steers" by the "Drook'n Dook"; the "Barn Gates Inn" will scarcely be known as such.

Our way to the west side of Windermere took us up through Lady Park, avoiding another turn on the right that led to Hawkshead, and ere long on the left hand affording pretty peeps of Wray Castle through the leafless trees. At Wray Church the faulty map tempted us to make a false turn to the left in order to reach a well-marked lake-shore road which did not exist. The upward run to High Wray revealed some pleasing glimpses of Blelham Tarn far below, a silvery gleam 'midst full pastoral loveliness. At High Wray the left-hand way was taken, despite the ominous warning sign, "Ferry Hotel $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles—very narrow road with six gates."

Yet a good surface tempted us speedily onward 'neath the shade of stately firs, and through a hazel coppice o'ertopped by the distant, faint green mist of the larches. A long hill soon led downwards to a closed gate near the open shore-line. Far across the restless span of blue the High Street range rose in Alpine splendour, white and wonderful above the

grey ramparts of Troutbeck's winding vale. Ill Bell outshone its underlings in shapely beauty, but the more northerly mass of sun-swathed Helvellyn, with forefront of Fairfield's lofty ridges, was arresting by reason alone of its shapeless bulkiness and gleaming brightness.

The plash of the waters on the pebbly beach kept us close company for a time, and after passing another gate an excellent surface allowed more speed as far as the deserted-looking mansion of Belle Grange. The road now made its presence felt, but at the speed that was only permissible amidst such lavish scenes of woodland beauty there was little need to complain. A fairly steep hill with rocky outcrops led up into an impressive avenue of ancient beeches rising above a crowded undergrowth of drooping laurels, their sombreness lightened by spikes of yellow bloom.

Then sudden clearings revealed the lake beyond an emerald foreground carpeted with bright wood-sorrel and dog's mercury. As we passed, the sun flashed full on the pretty island of Lady Holm which once belonged to the monks of Furness, and where in the time of Henry VIII there was a flourishing chapel dedicated to Our Lady. The sight foretold the approach to an excellent road, which was reached by the descent of a steep hill covered deeply with the russet remains of last year's glory of the giant beeches. This slippery interlude ended the only single mile of the road that could be called "bad."

Through the third gateway at the end of the

wood even the excellent surface failed to tempt us onwards. It was one of the prettiest sights that Windermere can offer. The opposite hilly outline, though tending to tameness, was rendered beautiful by the wealth of islands that dotted the nearer waters. Ahead, the fir-plumed heights above the Ferry point dropped gracefully over to a shore-line of grassy bays with drooping oaks wind-swayed, dangling and dipping their bare boughs in the ripples. Then the shore-line opened out, and far ahead there spread

“A host of golden daffodils
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.”

The glory of the flowers, so recklessly rather with winter still on the hill-tops, lined the roadway for almost a mile. Their very brightness seemed to add to the gloom of the woods of Claife that now closed down upon us.

The legend of this romantic spot involuntarily came to mind. Even to-day curious superstitions linger regarding the Crier of Claife. In earlier times the “Ferry” was a busy portion of the highway between Kendal and Hawkshead and Whitehaven; thus in all weathers the ferrymen pursued their hazardous work. One very stormy night, those in the Ferry Nab House on the Bowness side of the lake heard the usual long droning call “Boat,” from the opposite shore. At first they refused to cross, but eventually a young boatman defied all advice and launched away into the wild darkness. For hours and hours they

awaited his return, and finally crossed to find him in his boat in a dying condition, "frightened to his death by the horrible sight of a ghostly spectre."

This was the ghost that was said to haunt the Claife Heights. A monk of Furness exorcised the evil spirit, but every now and again it emerged from the darksome depths of the deserted quarry, and on stormy nights the Crier of Claife sent his doleful call across the waste of wind-swept waters. This latter portion is at least more or less true, for some of us have heard the Crier of Claife. During a savage gale from the south-east—a rare occurrence in Lakeland—the wind hurls itself down into the valley from between Cartmel Fell and Gummershow, and in the rebound is caught in the hollow front of the Claife Heights. In this natural phenomenon there probably lies the secret of the Crier of Claife. The ferry nowadays has a more practical interest for motorists in that they may use it for the crossing of the lake when hurrying to Hawkshead, Coniston, or anywhere west of Windermere.¹

Reverting to our run down the west shore-line of the lake, two more gates close together gave access to the branch road on the left that led to the Ferry Hotel. The footpath on the right recalled the view from the "Summer House," so beloved of all the neogams, that stands high up amidst the leafy screen on Claife. Then the broad highway was followed for a few hundred yards to

¹ The fee is 3s. for the crossing. Cars carrying two persons, 2s. ; return journey, free.

the foot of the long hill that would have led to Sawrey and thence to Hawkshead. A passing coachman saved us the long climb and a slight detour by tendering the information that the road to the left at the foot of the hill would save time. It led through a field and seemed uninviting. His answer to a further practical question amused some south-country companions ; the gist of it was that the road had a "guid topping," and that there was "yan steep laal click."

The field road led onwards by the lake, and soon beyond the remains of an old gateway began to mount a narrow, craggy shelf where on-coming traffic might have caused a dispute regarding right-of-way. Those on the outside would not forget that 20-foot drop over into the deep waters below. About a quarter of a mile after leaving the main highway the "steep laal click" called for the lowest gear. At its summit we swung out and downwards to the excellent, yet little known, road that connects Hawkshead and the Lakeside end of Windermere.

For a while the lakeward views across to Storrs and the richly timbered front of Cartmel Fell were engrossing. However, the speedier travel that was now possible quickly led us inland to Cunsey. The picturesque old village, with its bulk of timber and wooden produce set alongside the mountain torrent, recalled vividly many a similar scene in the Austrian Tyrol. Only the spiry Dolomites overhead were lacking. Yet on comparison the grey old houses seemed somewhat out of place ; one of them



THE FOOT OF WINDERMERE FROM THE WEST SIDE OF THE LAKE

A CHARACTERISTIC VIEW OF THE "RIVER-LAKE." GUMMERSHOW IS THE DISTANT, CENTRAL HEIGHT

certainly was so literally, for it had more than a share of the roadway.

Then over the Cunsey Bridge, where the beck from distant Esthwaite Water echoed noisily, the splendid road surface was a reminder of the forges that flourished here long ago. The refuse has made an ideal foundation. The branching way beyond the bridge was said to still hold the name of the Ore Gates. It led from the furnace to the forge some distance up the river and where a forge hammer weighing over 350 lb. was recently unearthed.

These dense surrounding woods of the Furness hills and dales, which we were now approaching, have always been the haunt of the charcoal-burners, whose output for the blomaries as long ago as Queen Elizabeth's time caused local trouble. The natural supply was so reduced that special laws were made. Nowadays some of the landowners arrange systematically to have an annual fall worth many hundreds of pounds in value. There is a world-wide output of bobbins, bark for tanning, fence wood, charcoal staves, basket twigs, and cask hoops—the latter especially for the West Indies.

There had evidently been fairly recent felling on the lakeward side of the road, for young oak, thick and straight-grown as larches, screened almost all but the skyward prospect. No signs of warmth lightened the grey undergrowth; only here and there a white-trunked birch rose lonesomely. Yet all was beautiful, and the stillness seemed like that

of a sleeping giant, a vast power waiting for the call to life, for the warmth that would clothe nakedness in beauty and strength to aid the welfare of the far-away world.

It seemed almost sacrilege to stir the echoes with the roar of full-throttled dash at a fearsome-looking, confronting gradient. But all power was needed. A suddenly surprising turn on a rocky slope of 1 in 4 demanded a hurried run through to the lowest gear, and we crept slowly up to the open space of the hill-top. The backward view was arresting in its breadth and grandeur of far-off snowy heights, and nearer gleaming lake, azure amidst a mantle of russet and purple. We learnt later that this was Bassicks Brows. Small wonder that, according to tradition, the Roman Army were so struck with the beauty of the scene that they halted here for the night on their northward journey to build the Dictis Fort at Ambleside.

A slight descent from the crest of the brow brought us into the direct main road between Hawkshead and the Lakeside end of Windermere, and the entrance gates to Graythwaite showed that civilization was close at hand. Arcades of oaks and full-grown hazels made the way ever pleasant and beautiful. Yet so scanty were the peeps of Windermere that there was a feeling of leaving the Lake country behind.

Soon Lakeside, with its trim, modern tourist accommodation, was passed, and the intervening mile of bumpiness between there and Newby Bridge made us feel that a sometime busy thoroughfare

was under wheel. The full chorus of the flooded Leven filled the glen near Newby Bridge. Then there was a swing around to the right after a backward glance at the picturesque bridge, with its quaint flying buttresses and the warm-coloured frontage of the Swan Hotel peeping over the coping's curving outline. The way then lay upwards on a wooded shelf above the railway, now hidden from sight in the rocky chasm below. The hurrying Leven filled the valley bottom, and on its farther side, in close attendance, a thin white line threading the timbered slope betokened the main road to Ulverston and the Furness district.

The way to the Rusland Valley—for thither we were bound on our backward journey to Lakeland and Hawkshead—swerved out to the right beyond the hill's crest, and then a short, steep descent led to three road ends. Unchecked speed made the suddenly revealed left-hand turn unadvisable, and thus we ran straight on to a halt some few yards up the narrow Vale of Finsthwaite. A sight of the thin trails of blue smoke curling lazily amidst the distant timber suggested thoughts of the charcoal-burners. We were almost tempted upwards to see them at work amongst the picturesque, heather-thatched huts in which they find a home and shelter during the "coaling" time. However, the long umber shadows on the fell-side showed that the sun was travelling westwards rapidly. The "reverse" was used, and we turned round towards the sea once more.

Only a quarter of a mile beyond the Fins-

thwaite Valley a well-marked branch road on the right gave the turn to Rusland. The unexpected swerve outwards, as it were on to the nose of the mountain, disclosed a scene of surprising beauty.

Away in the south, beyond the sinuous stretches of the Leven and Ulverston's prominent Hoad, lay the golden sands of Cartmel, horizoned by soft seaward veils of turquoise, blending into infinite removes of greyness till sea and sky were one. Then below, almost underneath the narrow roadway, lay the long valley levels, green with the promise of spring. The flanking western fells were aglow with the reds and browns and purples of their sapling overgrowth; so lush were they that there was little light of greenness visible. Over the westward foothills ranged the snow-capped ruggedness of Coniston Old Man, with sombre Doe Crag and wave-like Wetherlam in close attendance. They rose as do the Alps beyond the hills above Lake Leman. So deceptive was the effect of atmosphere and icy loftiness that to think of them as lower than 10,000 feet in height seemed impossible. Truly for colour effects and apparent grandeur, with variety vast and unexhaustible, the Lake-country mountain-land is the most wonderful in the world.

With such thoughts in mind we turned away and valleywards, but even the rigours of the steeply dangerous descent were not more engrossing than the rugged, firry front of Yewbarrow that now encompassed the forward vista. Then lower down

there kept along with us an army of sombre yews beneath whose sable roof of boughs lay "the grassless floor of red-brown hue, by sheddings from the piny umbrage tinged perennially." On the skyward heights shaggy sentinels, some with brown arms bared to the storm, clung to the grey rocks perilously, for this Rusland Yewbarrow meets and breaks the first fury of many a sea-borne gale.

Soon on the left the lichened walls, with green fields beyond, bordered the roadway. On the opposite side a wonderful array of veteran beeches, with great trunks elephant-coloured and grotesquely gnarled, proved entertaining company for fully a quarter of a mile. Gradually the pastoral beauties enfolded us. Farms, grey and white, dotted the open fell-slopes on either side, and some of the nearer cottages were studies that any artist would pass regretfully.

The way lay straight ahead up the valley, on to the right through Rusland village and past Crossland, to meet the Ashes Beck that for nearly a mile margined the roadway. Its name betokened its origin up in the haunts of the charcoal-burners. The steep hill at Thwaite Head conduced to tardy progress, and this afforded a full sight of the beauties of the hill-side houses with their daffodil orchards, where new lambs gambolled. An important roadway coming in on the left brought a reminder that a slight detour might have been made from Rusland up the Grizedale Valley and to Satterthwaite with its inn—a rarity in these

parts—and its neighbouring waterfalls. The best and prettiest way would have been by Force Forge and Force Mills, yet it would be well to remember that in these outlying Lancashire dales it is as easy to become as fully lost as in farthest Thule.

The Dale Park Valley, as this upper region beyond Rusland was called, now narrowed considerably; a hill led down into a hazel hollow where daffodils and scores of scurrying rabbits hid in the shady banks by a rushing rivulet. A natural doorway between two ancient yews with a tiny farm-stead alongside gave access to the higher reaches of the dale. Soon we were breasting a steep, long hill, where the low gear was a friend in need. Dense woods enclosed the way, and below, in the depths of a hidden gorge, the mountain torrent plunged noisily valleywards. Then a closed gate called for a halt on the steep final pitch, and here for the restarting of a heavy car a ratchet sprag would prove a comfort to all concerned.

There was just one last backward glance of the sea gleaming far distantly beyond the carmined copse-wood valley, and then we swung up to the open mountain-side. It was a land of grey rocks and flattened bracken, storm-laid, like a russet carpet over nature's ruggedness. The road stretched ahead still upwards and skywards. Then came the last rise and instant revelation of snow-clad peaks and wide valleys, pastured and timbered in rich profusion.

The mass of Helvellyn now assumed its full sovereignty as the second Lakeland monarch, dominating a host of vassal peaks from Steel End above the gap of Dunmail to Fairfield and the bulky buttress of the Red Screes. A long white trail, sharp cut against dark clouds, marked the highway of the Romans along High Street's smooth loftiness. Farther east rose the hills of Yorkshire, with Ingleborough unmistakable. Soon Esthwaite Water lay below, with cloud shadows patterning its glass-like greenness. Then a sight of the road dipping over into the depths dispelled all scenic interest. No warning marked the approach to an awkward corner and a descent of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$. The hill—well named the Devil's Gallop—was surprisingly steep for nearly a quarter of a mile, and near its foot a wooden gate called for a sudden halt.

The road throughout Rusland and even over the last fascinating hill had been of excellent surface; in fact superior to the main road by which we now travelled along the shore of Esthwaite Water and into the old-world village of Hawkshead. Wordsworth's school was noticed on the left in entering the village. The usual visit thereto afforded an opportunity of sitting on the rough, wooden bench where the great man learnt his lessons and also found time to carve his name on the desk. This latter valuable Hawkshead asset had been covered by a glass case. It seemed a great pity that the famous epitaph in the adjacent churchyard could not have been preserved likewise. This used to

be the popular attraction of the place ; it said of one of the fair departed, Elizabeth Smith by name—

“And from her marriage to her grave
She was never known to misbehave.”

The whole rhyme had been erased because “it wasn’t true,” so said the sons-in-law. Old Flag Street, the quaintest bit of all Hawkshead, had also departed—only post cards perpetuated its picturesque memory. With all the recent so-called local improvements, there were misgivings in making the search for the place where Wordsworth lodged. However, this was found by turning to the left, up the lane just opposite the Red Lion Hotel, and after passing under an archway the little cottage was noticed on the right. A modern wooden railing now prevents our American friends from taking the building away in their pockets.

Those who care to wander round Hawkshead will find much of interest, and motorists who would wish to return quickly to Windermere and Bowness could do so by the excellent road along the east shore of Esthwaite Water. The views on this side of the lake are the finest of all, for the Langdale Pikes and Wetherlam rise bulkily and apparently close at hand. Then after passing Near and Far Sawrey the road drops steeply to the Ferry Hotel, with the curious old ferry boat, so often mistaken for one of Windermere’s many islets, close at hand for the crossing.

At the Hawkshead end of Esthwaite Water there is a separate “dub,” known as Priest’s Pot :

why so called no one knows, though many guess. It has, or had, a floating island, quite a respectable specimen, decorated with alders and willows that served more or less as sails on a breezy day. It was on Esthwaite Water that Wordsworth laid the scene of his well-known skating lines; here that old Matthew sat dreaming on the old grey stone and growing double as he dreamed. Half-way down the lake was the yew-tree close to the seat where were left the lines beginning—

“Nay, traveller, rest. This lonely yew-tree stands
Far from all human dwelling.”

Alas! the old tree has been cut down because the cattle ate the leaves to their undoing.

Then as we sped Coniston-wards from Hawkshead some peeps of the old church dedicated to St. Michael recalled the early days when the monks of Furness ruled hereabouts. About half a mile from the village, Hawkshead Hall, a curious structural mixture of ancient and modern architecture, was noticed just beyond the important branching of the ways. That straight ahead would have led to Ambleside— $5\frac{1}{4}$ miles away, by Outgate, Lady Park, and the westerly side of Blelham Tarn.

The present road to the left led up the steady incline of Hawkshead Hill with backward views of the Hall, once the lordly dwelling—the seat of the manorial Court of Rights—of the Furness ecclesiastics, but now little more than a barn and byre in connection with the new erection. Nearly a mile beyond the turning a well-known landmark was passed.

This was the Baptist Chapel, and those bound for Tarn Hows would turn here to the right and mount up a narrow lane, crossing the main Ambleside-Coniston road that has come by the Barn Gates, or Drunken Duck Inn. Grand as is the prospect from the famous view-point above High Cross, it is more suitable for pedestrians than motorists. The same may usually be said of Tarn Hows set wildy amongst the larches and heather slopes, more like a Highland loch than any other water in Lakeland.

This much we had learnt from former experience of the stony, unkempt road ; moreover, the views as we rode over High Cross were grand in the extreme and scarcely surpassed by those from the higher stand-point. From the crest of the incline, about 600 feet above sea-level and 350 feet above Hawks-head Hall, the descent across the richly timbered slopes of Burnt Riggs began. Every turn revealed new beauty. The scanty foliage of the budding larch plumes gave the Old Man full chance of magnificent display, his great white head piercing the March greyness aloft, and his emerald feet awash in the blue lake below.

The right-hand turn for Coniston village was avoided, for the road along the lake's easterly shore was to carry us southwards to the Crake Valley, and thence back again to Windermere by Newby Bridge. Moreover, this route would afford the grandest scenery that this valley can show : that on the other side of the lake suffers from the overpowering closeness of the Old Man. The main road was joined just beyond Tent Lodge, Tennyson's favourite

haunt hereabouts, and now were seen to perfection the grey houses of Coniston—formerly Church Coniston—nestling snugly below the Old Man's wide frontage.

The huge and wonderful trees, which rank as this valley's great glory, and incidentally its greatest danger to motorists in wet, "skiddy" summer weather, now stood bare and unobstructive to the drying influence of sun and air. Thus the winding and narrow road could be followed speedily, and soon the cream-coloured gables of Coniston Bank were far behind. Brantwood, almost entirely hidden 'midst gloomy evergreens, called for no halt. The famous view from Brantwood itself, so approved by Wordsworth, is now practically invisible; but Ruskin's favourite bit of roadway beyond the house was as beautiful as of yore, though not yet lined by the clustering convolvulus and the pageant of wild flowers that add to its summer's charm.

Hereabouts the Old Man assumed his shapeliest form, and on his left the dark, underlying cliff of Doe Crag seemed sombre by contrast, with its dagger-like crest snow-tipped and gleaming red in the last glitter of the sunset afterglow. North of the Old Man, Yewdale Crag dipped valley-wards and revealed the distant snowy ranges of Helvellyn, an azure veil tipped with whiteness. Above the opposite and more southerly shore-line stood Torver Fell, clad in its spring coat of many colours and adding brightness even amongst the falling shadows. Surely this was the most wonderfully verdured of all the south Lakeland hills.

Fir Island, promontory or island according to the state of the rain-gauge, added to the charm of the foreground, and as we skirted close by the beautiful lake shore the words of Christopher North came to mind to controvert the opinion that, "like most of her sisters, Coniston Water is plain about the feet." The genial writer, in advising others to visit this corner of Lakeland, thus aptly eulogized and described the end of the lake: "You will be well repaid for your labour by the promontories and bashful bays they conceal, and merry meadows lying in ambush, and 'corn riggs sae bonny' trespassing upon the coppice woods that, year after year, yield up their lingering roots to the ploughshare; and grey, white, blue, green, and brown cottages of every shape and size, and pastoral eminences of old lea crowned with a few pine-trees, or with an oak, itself a grove."

Nibthwaite gave us the last glimpse of the lake and the little bay where the floating island became stranded during the storm of a few years ago. Coniston's tree-clad islet was the biggest of the floating species, and its char are also famous for their flavour. The way now entered the narrow valley of the Crake, strangely reminiscent of the Derbyshire dales, with road and river close companioned in the deep hollow between the hills. About a mile below Nibthwaite the sharp turn on the right at Arklid would have taken us across the Crake and to the Lake Bank Hotel at the foot of the lake. The northward view from Beacon Crag, the grandest scene of its kind in Lakeland, would



CONISTON WATER FROM THE FOOT OF THE VALLEY—LAKE BANK
HELVELLYN IS THE DOMINATING MASS AMONGST THE FINE DISTANT ARRAY OF MOUNTAINS

well have repaid the detour. Yet the twilight sombreness of the Old Man urged the thought that the splendid road straight ahead would lead more directly to Windermere. Moreover, quicker travel appealed somewhat after the day's wanderings.

Southwards we sped, crossing the river to its western bank at Lowick Bridge, through Penny Bridge, with its "grandest oaks in all Lancashire," to Greenodd. There the Crake was recrossed, and soon the speed-way over the Haverthwaite Moss was under wheel. The sharp turn to the left was carefully avoided at Lane Head, and thence directly on to the crossing of the Leven at Backbarrow the way was unmistakable. In the depths of the narrow valley night fell suddenly, and ere Newby Bridge was passed, but not crossed, the lights from the surrounding fell-side dwellings began to peep forth, like stars astray from the indigo firmament.

Soon on the left beyond Fell Foot, Windermere lay below in inky darkness, and the well-known, tiresomely undulating highway led on to Bowness and the northern Lakeland. Meanwhile, there was ample time to agree that for those who wish to see some of the least known and most beautiful portions of the southerly side of the Lake country, this round of Windermere and Coniston should specially appeal. Moreover, with the exception of the short, but nevertheless fascinating, section on the practically unknown west side of Windermere, the roads throughout were remarkably good, and in summer-time would suffer little deterioration from coaching traffic.

CHAPTER VI

WANDERINGS IN THE LANGDALES— TO CONISTON AND THE VALE OF DUDDON

“Behind the spires and battlements that fret
The blue of heaven, stretch thy terraces
Green with the larch-tree and the traceries
Of elm and hazel ; and the bursting rills
Shower with their spray the golden daffodils.
In the lone woods that seek the mountain's height
The frail white wind-flowers gleam through the long night ;
And in the hedges and the fields thy feet
Trample the fragrance of the meadow-sweet.”

T. E. CASSON

THE Langdale Pikes need but scant introduction to those who wander round Windermere. The twin peaks assert their presence unerringly, and the sight of their graceful outline beyond the long dale at the head of the longest lake seems a continual invitation to come to a closer acquaintance.

Curiously enough, though varied and splendid roads are available, comparatively few motorists stray into the inner sanctuary of this mountain recess, and that despite the fact that not even Borrowdale can claim greater natural beauty than the two dales. Great Langdale is the popular valley. This is probably due to the fact that the ulterior attractions of the hotels at Dungeon Ghyll

afford a definite project, but Little Langdale possesses the more varied and impressive range of mountain scenery. The mass of Lingmoor separates the two valleys. Unfortunately there is no satisfactory road across this heathery height excepting that connecting their upper reaches, and this, the Blea Tarn road, is so exceedingly loose and rough on the Great Langdale side as to make its ascent by anything on tyres prohibitive.

Yet the descent is commonly made by motors, and in the case of light cars the damage to tyres may be considered inappreciable, for the surface stones are rounded and weather-worn. The coaches make the descent in following their usual tour, which is up Little Langdale and down Blea Tarn Hill into Great Langdale, whence they return down the valley to Ambleside. The motorist is not concerned in the cruelly painful pantings of horse-flesh, though at times the painful panting of his horse-power may cause misgivings and even misfirings; thus he may elect to neglect the plan adopted by the coaches and see these two valleys in a more effective and impressive way.

Ambleside is really the best starting-point, but those coming from the north of Lakeland might prefer to take the shorter way from Grasmere over Red Bank. In either case the plan is to reach the branching roads near the top of this famous incline. From Ambleside one follows warily through the speed limit to the bridge over the Rothay River, whose clear blue depths may be noticed despite the somewhat engrossing turn over the "hog's back."

The ensuing village of Clappersgate is scarcely beautiful, and it is almost a relief to swing off to the right out of the clutches of its lofty stone walls. Almost immediately the River Brathay peeps through a canopy of elm and alder on the left, and its noisy chorus amongst the big brown boulders seems Nature's call to those who would hurry past, its charms unseen. There is a wild waywardness in its turbulence, and the sombre waters, though gemmed with little islands of golden marigolds and velvety, yellow, gleaming mosses, have an untamed look.

This is just the opposite to the light, peaceful-flowing Rothay, whose gentleness merges into the full strength of the Brathay ere their life ends in the lake's still vastness. It is a curious fact that the char never mistake their own river—the Brathay; its deep olive depths are their home. The trout choose the clear grey pools of the Rothay. Yet higher up amongst the meadow levels the Brathay has many a broad expanse of still water, where the mountains mirror themselves in morning and evening calm.

That a church set on a hill cannot be hid is now evident by the sight of Brathay Church enthroned in a flowery knoll overlooking the river. Then the road winds under the wooded, outlying buttresses of Loughrigg and round many a treacherous corner, where even the first revelation of the Langdale Pikes' nearer glories may scarcely be appreciated. About two and a half miles from Ambleside there is a straight run to a sharp turn on the left. There

the main valley road swerves round to Skelwith Bridge. But now let the motorist neglect this and mount straight ahead up the branch road towards Red Bank, with Loughrigg overshadowing his approach.

Eller Brow, steep and twisty, calls out the song of the gears ; but soon the levels of the cross-roads are passed, and the crest of the hill straight ahead affords a pretty peep of Loughrigg Tarn on the right, sleepy and still in its grassy hollow. "Diana's Looking Glass"—for thus the tarn has been named—is frequently passed without the traveller recognizing its presence. From the road this calmness lends an aspect of artificiality, and only from the farther or easterly side of the tarn does it assume an interesting contour, with the distant Pikes of Langdale reflected in its placid surface. After a short descent the road rises again, and soon there appears the sharp turn to the right. A few yards farther comes a narrow, awkward passage round a farmstead, where wandering, web-footed waddlers play ducks and drakes, literally, with one's best efforts to speed up the hill.

The road mounts gradually under the shadow of Loughrigg, until an acute-angled turn is noticed on the left. The way straight ahead leads to the top of Red Bank, where may be seen the most comprehensive and beautiful view of the Vale of Grasmere, with the little village lying snugly between the lake and the mountains. The thin white thread trailing up into the deep gap beyond is the highway over Dunmail Raise, which

separates Steel Fell and Helm Crag on the left from Seat Sandal and Fairfield on the right.

Then let the short return be made to the Langdale corner. Those coming on a car with a lengthy wheel-base would do well to leave their machine here because of the difficulty of turning in the "narrows" above Red Bank. At first the Langdale road rises slightly amidst artificial surroundings, and eventually emerges round two ugly corners on to the open mountain-side.

This mountain scene from High Close is one of the grandest that any Lakeland road can offer. The two Langdale valleys here take definite form with their dividing peak of Lingmoor, as its name would indicate, clad in sombre colouring of aged heather or ling, whilst the deep green of the Westmorland slate breaks the rounded contour into rugged beauty. On the left, Wetherlam wholly dominates the Coniston Old Man group, and Crinkle Crag, unmistakable in their crinkled outline, lead the eye around to the Snowdon-like cone of Bowfell, with the two graceful Pikes of Langdale rising to the right. Elterwater, with its grey and white home-steads hiding amongst the sycamores, diverts the gaze valleywards and then to the foreground of ugly man-made walls with the steeply descending road close below.

The downward way, carefully avoiding an uninviting left-hand branch, soon brings the "capital" of Langdale close at hand. This Chapel Stile—or Steel, as the locals call it—shows several pretty yew-shaded cottages during the approach from

High Close. Set in a corner on the fell-side, the modern-looking church reveals a charm of setting, and sound also if the bells be heard echoing amongst the grey crags that hold close converse with the tower, one time a part of their massiveness.

Not so very many years ago things ecclesiastic were more primitive here. The same may be said of the people. The clergyman used to preach in knee-breeches and yellow stockings. One day the pulpit in the old chapel fell over just after the preacher had delivered his text, "Behold I come quickly!" An elderly dame escaped miraculously. As soon as the good man recovered his feet, he congratulated her on surviving the dangerous adventure. But she tartly refused his sympathy, saying, "If I'd been kilt I'd been reet sarved, fer ye threethened ye'd be comin' doon soon."

The road keeps straight on through the upper part of the village and past the Thrang Crag Slate Quarries, and "thrang" or busy they certainly are, if one may judge by the tremendous outpouring of debris. It is here that are sometimes found the curious picture slates that are said to reproduce the outlines of the surrounding mountains. Other "thrang" spots of similar ugliness are noticed on the other side of the valley, but soon these are left behind. A timbered spur is rounded and the Pikes, now quite near at hand, dominate the whole scene, with Bowfell peering rather humbly over the shoulder of Pike o' Stickle. Harrison Stickle, the loftier of the two Pikes, is 2401 feet above

sea-level. A gate on the top of the hill usually has some of the ruddy-faced young mountain dwellers in attendance, and thence a downward run leads to the gravelly road in the valley bottom.

In flood time a depth of three or four feet of water is commonly seen here. It is good to end with the seeing rather than the feeling at such times: many a car has spent the night here, the while its occupants rested uneasily in the hotel until daylight made aid from ropes and willing hands possible.

The New Dungeon Ghyll Hotel should mark the limit of the average motorist's travel up Great Langdale. Short, light-built cars might very easily visit the Upper or Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, for the road, though stony and narrow, is almost level. The skid-riven mountain-side—by some called a road—which gives access to Blea Tarn and the upper part of Little Langdale should be rigorously avoided. From the new hotel an easy walk of scarcely more than ten minutes brings Dungeon Ghyll into sight. The way lies to the left up the brackened fell-side, where, in summer sunshine, the grasshoppers chorus every whit as loudly as in flowery Alpine meadows, whilst here the larks add cheery notes of light and loftiness.

The waterfall itself is more worth a visit than most of the others in the Lake country. Its beauty is not so dependent on the state of the rain-gauge, for it is the setting rather than the fall of water that makes the charm of the place. It is a deep rift

in the body-rock of the Pikes, and some hundred feet back in the dungeon-like gloom there comes from a hole, sixty feet overhead, a thin spray-like stream of water. Rare ferns and plants, happily out of reach, flourish in the moist recess, and the great boulder, which roofs in the top of the gorge, affords delight to those who in the crossing emulate the example of Wordsworth's shepherd boys.

Others may care also to stray up to the right into the rocky hollow of Mill Ghyll, where the white-foamed falls are often mistaken for their more famous neighbour. These cascades come from Stickle Tarn, an hour above the hotel and under the crags of Pavey Ark ; but, as they provide the power when required for the Elterwater Powder Works, they are not always on view.

Then the way may be retraced as far as Chapel Stile, where a downward turn to the right leads to Elterwater village, whose cottages do not improve in appearance on closer acquaintance. Less than a quarter of a mile beyond the bridge over the Langdale Beck near the village, a sharp turn on the right gives the way to Little Langdale over Ullet Nest Hill. Thus the authorities spell it, but the natives know it as "Oolet," or Owlet Nest, and any motor-wanderer who traverses it at night will appreciate the appropriate naming.

The climb soon becomes interesting and somewhat steep, though scarcely more so than any other approach to Little Langdale. The steepest section, 22 yards in length, rises in a straight stretch of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$, and when the twisting "narrows" are

reached the slope assumes quite an easy angle. The Government Powder Works are in the thick woods on the right. Then ere long a gate leads out of the larch plantation, and there is a sudden disclosure of Little Langdale set lonely, deep, and wild amidst high mountains. Its "Great" neighbour can show nothing finer than this scene from the "Nest." In the afternoon light Wetherlam looks huge, with the reed-fringed tarn at its feet, whilst below its right shoulder the Gap of Wrynose separates Crinkle Crags and Pike o' Blisco, black and curiously peaked, from their bulkier neighbour. The way is all downhill for quite a mile, until the coach road up the valley is joined.

Those bound direct for Coniston should turn sharply to the left here, but others may be tempted, after the wonderful view from above Ullet Nest, to see more of Little Langdale. It is really a most fascinating corner of Lakeland, and the road to Fell Foot Farm, the last house in the dale, is quite good, though narrow in parts and gate-guarded against the speed-man. Picturesque, yew-sheltered farm-steads appear by the way, and at one spot there is an alluring glimpse of the upper rocky ramparts of the Langdale Pikes in the next valley. They show beyond the depression wherein lies the reedy lakelet of Blea Tarn, so favoured by photographers, and also by worshippers of Wordsworth, who made the mountain hollow the scene of his "Solitary."

Just through a gate the road on the right leads up and across the juniper-covered slopes to this favoured spot. Light cars very often make the



LITTLE LANGDALE AND WETHERLAM

A TYPICAL LAKELAND MOUNTAIN DALE; WYNOSE PASS AND FELL FOOT ARE SEEN ON THE EXTREME RIGHT;
LITTLE LANGDALE TARN LIES BELOW ON THE LEFT

ascent. The hill is never steeper than 1 in 5, but the sharp stony surface is sometimes so splintered that for heavy cars the tyre bill may be even "steeper" than 1 in 4: the writer knows of one occasion when two out of four good tyres were sacrificed.

It is more edifying to run on to Fell Foot Farm and look at Wrynose Pass, undoubtedly to motorists one of the worst mountain passes in the district. Yet in a few years it will probably recover its favour and glory of former times. It was a famous route in the packhorse days, when there was great traffic between Kendal and Whitehaven. The gable front of the farm still shows the arms of the Flemings of Rydal, who bought the place in 1707, and behind the building the strangely terraced mound is supposed to have been used for the gathering of the "Thing" or judicial court of the Danish King Ethelred's time.

From just beyond the farmyard can be seen the Signal Rock standing high up in the gap of the pass. It was from there that the packhorse cavalcades signalled to the farmhouse, that the brewing of the ale might be begun for the refreshment of the descending travellers. Local worthies say it was still more used by the smugglers, who were greatly successful hereabouts. Auld Nanny Martindale at Fell Foot had long been the trouble of the excise officers, but on one occasion they made sure that a great capture would be made. The heavily laden smugglers had been chased into the farm, but no trace of them could be found excepting where Auld Nanny sat upstairs with her

great crinoline outspread. Suspicious sounds came from beneath her. The officers felt sure of their prey and glibly joined in the old woman's general gossip. Finally the chief gauger persuaded her to move, but only to disclose a large barrel underneath. It sounded hollow to the touch, but on removal the bung-hole was found to lead to a hole through the ceiling into the room below. The smugglers and their wares were far away.

It is interesting to walk some way up the old road and notice how easily it could be made good; in fact, the gradients are splendidly engineered, the bridges are sturdy stone structures, and only the surface is lacking to send the motorist on his westward way rejoicing. At present the boulder- and stone-strewn track is deeply furrowed by mountain storms, and, except for records, no motorist would willingly cross from Fell Foot into Eskdale. The first crossing has recently been made.

The steepest uphill gradient of all the journey comes near the top of Wrynose Gap. It is only a short 10-yard stretch of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$; the rest averages about 1 in 6 almost continuously for $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Just beside the gap is the Three Shire Stone to mark the exact spot where the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire join. Then, for the benefit of those who may be tempted to cross the passes into Eskdale, it may be mentioned that the descent of Hard Knott would prove the most trying of all. There are gradients of 1 in 3; moreover, the surface is very rough, and slippery on the grassy sections.

The way now lies towards Coniston, and the descent of the full length of Little Langdale to Colwith Bridge should be made. About a quarter of a mile beyond the turning from Ullet Nest Hill, the village of Little Langdale itself will be noticed. There many motorists bound for Coniston go astray. The branch road on the right, which gives a way to that valley by Tilberthwaite, should be avoided because of the deceptively deep ford through the river. True it is that they keep a big rope at Tilberthwaite Farm for the rescuing of ford-fast motorists as well as crag-fast sheep, but the experience is prone to prove unpleasant, and expensive withal.

Thus the main coach road is followed down the steep, winding inclines to Colwith Bridge, where those wishful to see Colwith Falls may obtain the key from the cottage on the left. In wet weather the delay will not be regretted; at such times the torrent-filled gorge bears a striking resemblance to that at Lodore.

Then from Colwith Bridge the splendid road on the right is followed upwards to Oxenfell. The well-known Colwith Hill, shaped like a huge S, is first climbed, and in these days its steepest gradients of 1 in $6\frac{1}{3}$ and 1 in 7 seldom cause trouble. At its summit the main coach road between Skelwith Bridge and Coniston is joined. It might be mentioned here, by the way, that those bound direct from Ambleside to Coniston village would find this their easiest and best route, though that by Barn Gates Inn and High Cross is

rather shorter. The somewhat long and twisty hill from Skelwith Bridge possesses only one really steep step; this is near the summit, and for about twenty yards the gradient is 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$.

The views on the easy ascent up Oxenfell are magnificent and of continuous variety. The Langdale Pikes are conspicuous above the larch-fringed foothills, where at all seasons the colour splendour is most pronounced. Then the way lies up amidst the heather and the heights, where the twisted limbs of the dark Scotch firs tell of the sea-flung gales that sometimes stay one's speeding over Oxenfell. Soon comes the swift flight down beautiful Yewdale. Great rocks, purple, red, and yellow, loom overhead through the foliage-screened roadway, until suddenly one sweeps out into the open, and Coniston Old Man o'ertops the nearer heights.

One and a half miles from Coniston village, and shortly after crossing a narrow, sharp-crowned bridge over Yewdale Beck, a branch road on the right gives access to the Tilberthwaite Valley. This secluded hollow under Wetherlam is easily gained in a few minutes from the main road. The car may be left outside the gate just before the cottages are reached, and thence it is a delightful stroll up a path amongst the old slate workings into the gorge of Tilberthwaite Ghyll.

Tilberthwaite Farm, a quarter of a mile farther on, is a typical Lakeland mountain home, where the whirr of the spinning-wheel is still heard. The adjacent cottages are famous for the longevity of

their inhabitants. In one of these not long ago an infirm old daleswoman might have been seen nursing her grandson's grandchild. The two represented the extremes of five generations, and thus old Mary Tyson might possibly have truthfully quoted the well-known lines, "Arise, daughter, and go to thy daughter, for thy daughter's daughter hath got a daughter!"

From the entrance to Tilberthwaite Valley as far as Coniston the way lies down gentle inclines through the rich woods of Yewdale, but where the huge and famous yews, from which the valley is named, are only memories of the past. Just before reaching Coniston village there are distant peeps of the lake. The road sweeps twice round to the left, and then curves to the right past a turning on the left, which would lead to Waterhead or the east side of Coniston Water. Soon the straight village street is entered, where, down a by-way on the right, may be noticed the Ruskin Museum.

The way to Broughton and the Vale of Fudon lies over the bridge opposite the church, and then after turning to the left a straightforward southerly course takes one out of the narrow street to the open slopes under Coniston Old Man. These are followed for many a mile up hill and down dale. Ever-changing mountain outlines rise overhead on the right, but Coniston Water, far away on the left, is always monotonous and un-beautiful in form when seen from this westerly side.

At Torver there is a fine glimpse into the

rocky recesses of the Old Man, Doe Crag, and Walna Scar. Then having taken the right-hand turn beyond the village—that to the left would lead to the foot of Coniston Water—the higher peaks are gradually left behind and the sea appears ahead beyond the sandy stretches of the Duddon Estuary.

The road, which never in the 9-mile journey between Coniston and Broughton boasts a really good surface, passes through many a lively farm-yard. One of these is encountered below a steep hill, where awkward turns and loose stones abound. A few hundred yards farther there appears a signpost, which gives Whitehaven 30 miles, and Barrow 16 miles. The turn on the right, slightly uphill and marked to the former place, should be taken.

Then rather more than a mile before reaching Broughton the direction of a signpost on the right marked Seathwaite, which is a well-known village in the Duddon Valley, ought to be avoided. Neither need Broughton itself be entered, for, when the houses appear in sight, the road to Whitehaven branches off to the right and shortly reaches the High Cross Inn. Here the sharp corner to the right should be negotiated, and soon a long descent brings one to Duddon Bridge.

The splendid highway which goes to the coast in the direction of Millom and Bootle has now to be forsaken in favour of a more adventurous and interesting mountain road on the right-hand side of the bridge. This graceful structure is not crossed. The beautiful Duddon must now be one's companion

up into the stern hill fastnesses, where, but for thoughts of tyres, it might be followed even to its moss-prankt birthplace in the wilds of Wrynose. For a while the river is left below "gliding in silence with unfettered sweep" over smooth, flat sand ocean-bound. Ere long it will be met in boisterous mood, wrestling and hurling itself in watery fury amongst the great rocks that fain would stay its progress.

But for a time the ways and means of upward travel demand attention. The meadows, where the spring-time daffodils make a wondrous show, are soon past. The little village of Bank End, screened by rich orchards, seems like many another pretty Lake-country resting-place; but there is little rest here for the man at the wheel or his whirring engine. A famous hill hides around the corner. The approach is steep, but the sudden revelation of the "hair-pin" overhead causes hurried handling of the gears. Yet the real struggle is only for some twenty yards or so on the upper turn, where a gradient of 1 in $4\frac{1}{4}$ must cause anxious moments to any owner of a lengthy wheel-base. Then for a few yards comes a welcome respite from steepness. But this hill at Bank End is not yet conquered. It continues upwards for nearly half a mile, and in several places has long stretches of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in 6, with two corners graded to 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$. The proper name of this incline is Greedy Gate Brow.

Then the coppice is forsaken, and the road sweeps out on to the breast of the mountain, where rocky outcrops are riven and shattered into

quaintest forms. Doubtless the storm-exposed frontage accounts for this ; but every now and again old twisted yews will be noticed growing out of the splintered masses, as though proud of their strength of growth to split the hardest granite. During the descent to the friendly company of the Duddon once more, the view of the mountain-enclosed valley is superb. Afar off, the grey peaks of Bowfell and the Scawfell massif rise alluringly. Nearer at hand, the bright line of the river winds up amongst the gold and purple of Wallabarrow and the rugged slopes of Walna Scar.

At Ulpha—or “Oopha,” if one would be understood by the natives—the Duddon is crossed by means of a picturesque bridge presided over by a tiny cottage, slate-tinted and white-lined against the madder purple of Ulpha Fell in such fashion as to make every artist call for a halt. But beautiful as are these wayside cottages, the real charm of Duddon Vale is in the upper reaches of its rock-bound river. Rather more than two miles beyond Ulpha, with its kirk set on a hill, a narrow bridge leads to the other bank and thence up to Seathwaite. This is pronounced “See-a-thet” : it should not be confused with the Borrowdale Seathwaite, or “See-wait,” as the Cumbrians call it. The river is lost here for a while ; it has turned suddenly through a jaw-like mountain gorge on the left to rejoin the roadway a mile higher up the vale.

Seathwaite has become famous through Wordsworth’s “Wonderful Walker,” the spiritual guide, philosopher, and friend of the dales-folk of over

a hundred years ago. In all manner of small ways during his sixty years' pastorate at Seathwaite, he amassed a small fortune. Doubtless the excellence of his "home-brewed," which he disposed of to the congregation without a licence, contributed to this success. A plain slate slab, visible from the road, and on the south side of Seathwaite Church, bears the inscription: "Rob. Walker, d. 25th June 1802, æt. 92 and 67th year of his curacy. Also Ann his wife, d. 1800, æt. 92."

Those who linger in the village may care to visit Wordsworth's "Stepping Stones"; a path leads thence in about a third of a mile from near the church. So far as the motorist is concerned, the road up the valley soon begins to deteriorate unpleasantly, and numerous gates are encountered ere Birks Bridge, two miles from Seathwaite, is seen close by on the left. It is a vastly interesting drive up to this finest bit of the Duddon. Water-courses and storm-rounded stones mar the surface of the roadway, whilst one precipitous hill, which is noticed where the road branches to the left, a mile from Seathwaite, may tempt many to forego further exploration of the unique valley. The difficulty of turning should not be forgotten, but at Birks Bridge average-sized cars may succeed more or less comfortably.

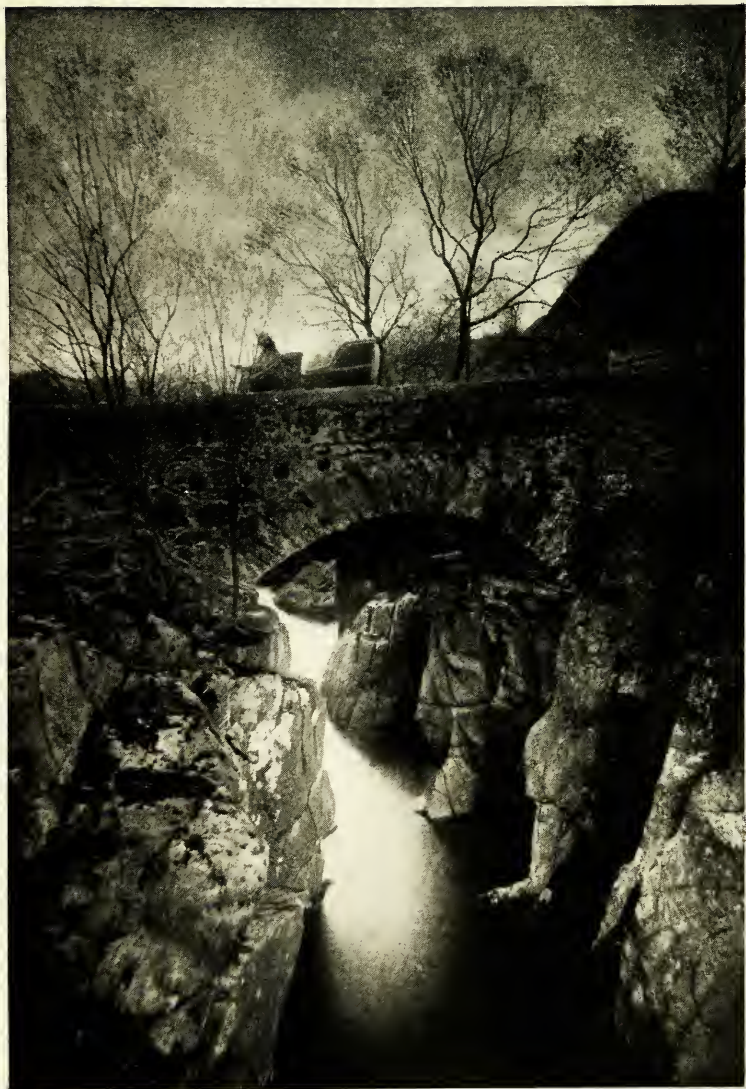
Enthusiasts may continue as far as the houses at Cockley Beck, two miles farther on, at the head of the dale, but the rock and river scenery is at its grandest in the vicinity of Birks Bridge. It is here that the Duddon, forsaking its leisurely flow

between banks lined with sweet-scented bog myrtle, asphodels, and parnassia, plunges hastily 'midst great boulders and far over into the abyss. It now moves slowly on into a deep black pit, whence spring bare, weather-bleached rocks like flying buttresses of some old cathedral front. They are water-worn and carved into fantastic shapes: here an ogreish face grins across the gorge at a granite fish with mouth agape; there a colossal leg with perfect foot rests on the surface of the gloomy pool. Then from the safety of the bridge the aqueous pit has a milder aspect. Here the blue transparent depths might well be Wordsworth's fairy chasm—

"Abodes of naiads, calm, abysses pure,
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to endure."

There is a strong temptation to wander in this witching spot, but the motorist can make little use of his speed on the Duddon roads, and the downward way must be begun. After the nine-miles return journey to Broughton, the splendid highway run by Newby Bridge and Bowness-on-Windermere to Ambleside is delightful by contrast. Through Grizebeck, Lowick Green, Grenodd, and Haverthwaite would give the best route between Broughton and Newby Bridge.

But those with time to spare and the sporting spirit of the explorer in their blood, may be tempted over the fell road by Birker Moor and into Eskdale. To this end the Traveller's Rest Inn, a few hundred yards before reaching Ulpha Kirk in the descent of the valley, must be the turning-point



BIRKS BRIDGE IN DUDDON DALE

THE RIVER, FORTY FEET BELOW, HAS CARVED OUT GROTESQUE HOLLOWS IN THE ROCKY WALLS. CURIOUS FACES MAY BE NOTICED, AND AT ONE SPOT A "GIANT'S FOOT" RESTS UPON THE WATER

from the Duddon up into the mountains. The distance from here to the King of Prussia Inn, in Eskdale, is scarcely more than $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It may, however, be unwise to state the time required for the crossing; suffice it to say, in somewhat of an Irishism, that the slowest is likely to be the quickest. Many have found that this road, despite the fact that signposts confidently and aggressively mark it as the way to Whitehaven, can play rough pranks with the hurrier.

The first adventure comes on the Traveller's Rest Hill.¹ It is curly, rough and steep, and anything but restful. One is immediately agrip with a gradient of 1 in 5, which gradually steepens to 1 in $3\frac{7}{8}$ on the lower bend. Then comes a longer rise of 1 in 5, with short intermittent steps of 1 in $4\frac{2}{3}$. Higher up the prevailing upward slope is 1 in 6, with a final rise of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ before the easier mountain road is gained. Then, just when one's engine begins to feel free from the heaviness of the steeps, a gate stays progress.

At last, with Ulpha over a mile behind, the upper levels are gained, and in front the greatest of the Lakeland peaks tower beyond miles of heathery moorland. The Pikes of Scawfell, Bowfell, and Crinkle Crag vary their forms in surprising manner as one glides westward. Then comes the lofty summit outlook where the sea hangs high upon the horizon, a sapphire screen for the most part, but here and there flushed with orange splendour where the sun breaks through the cloudy greyness.

¹ The old inhabitants call it Hazelwood Brow.

A turn on the left has to be avoided. This would lead to Devoke Water, which yet contains some descendants of the fine fat trout that the merry monks of Furness brought over from Italy to help the lentils and dry bread of abstinence days. A mile beyond the lonely mountain lake, along such a road as few motorists could endure, is situated the strange "City" of Barnscar, a perennial problem for the antiquarian, with its strange old remains to suggest all kinds of fancies. Local belief says that it was once a Danish city, and silver coins have been found thereabouts. In earlier times, when Hutchinson wrote his history of the district, there were walls and a main street discernible, but now merely piles of stones are visible on the desolate fell-side. The popular tradition is that the Danes peopled this Barnscar by making a raid on Drigg and Beckermet, and compelling the males and females in the respective villages into marriage. Thus even to-day, when anything more than intimate friendship occurs between young couples in this district, they are said to "go together like the lads of Drigg and the lasses of Beckermet."

Then comes the meeting of four road-ends, and a problem of more pressing importance than that of the origin of Barnscar. That to the left, marked "Devoke Water," should be the choice if a certain guide-book were correct, whilst another gives the one on the right as the way into Eskdale, which advice the signpost confirms. The route straight ahead, the one that merely begins as a grassy track,

and is marked "To Whitehaven," proves eventually to be the correct way.

Yet few will believe it until they actually reach the King of Prussia Inn, and learn that they have come the best road, for all are almost equally bad. One has memories of wonderful seaward views above, and black abysses below, where the road dips ever downward venturously "'midst seas of heather derelict." Now comes toboggan-like progress down some loose, steep, slippery slope, then sudden watercourses play pitch and toss with one's ease of body and mind. At last green fields appear; a gate, truly welcome now, augurs approach to civilization again. There is a final shake-up in the crossing of a rudely paved farmyard, where the owner smiles genially but knowingly on the passing travellers. In a few minutes comes the Eskdale highway and the long-sought sign of the King of Prussia Inn.

Thence those homeward bound for Ambleside might make for Santon Bridge, near which the seaward road branches to the left. Then, joining the main road, and rounding Black Combe, they may avoid Millom by turning to the left at Whicham and, passing through Hallthwaites, reach Broughton with its varied choice of northerly routes. After this somewhat trying yet delightfully sporting round, the motorist would be well advised to return to Ambleside by Coniston and over Oxenfell—the distance is 17 miles.

CHAPTER VII
KIRKSTONE PASS—ULLSWATER
AND KESWICK

“Over the rills and the crags and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains.”

SHELLEY

AMONGST motorists Kirkstone Pass is at once the best and the worst-known pass in the Lake country. In the South it is a common experience to hear one motorist speak of its ascent with language illimitable in its badness, whilst another talks airily of the climb on higher gears despite his lower power. Yet neither need necessarily suffer from the “fisherman’s imagination”; both may be correct. The fact is that there are four ways up Kirkstone Pass from the Ambleside and Windermere direction. That from Ambleside direct will test the most powerful modern touring-car to the utmost, whilst the one by Troutbeck Valley from Cook’s Corner is, comparatively speaking, quite an ordinary run. Of these two routes the former is the shortest, and the latter the longest of all the four.

Then from close by Low Wood there rises a climb of intermediate severity, but possessed of far the grandest views and continuous interest.

The fourth way begins at Troutbeck Bridge, and though shorter than that from Cook's Corner offers inferior views and a narrower, less-cared-for roadway. Yet this latter, like that from Low Wood, has the great advantage of passing through Troutbeck Village, one of the most picturesque and interesting hamlets in the North Country. There is nothing steeper than 1 in 7 on this approach to Troutbeck.

In giving more minute details of the other three ways to the top of Kirkstone Pass, the one which, in the writer's opinion, is of most interest is that from Low Wood. This may be mentioned first. The beginning looks unpromising; this doubtless accounts for its comparative neglect. Those coming from Ambleside start up the twisting hill which rises to the left just after passing Low Wood Hotel. From here it is $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the Kirkstone Inn, and every yard of the way is delightful, for the magnificent north-westerly outlook begins to open out immediately. Now and again the road itself attracts attention. This initial hill is fully 250 yards long, and begins with a gradient of 1 in 6 for over 20 yards. After a short, easier section the rest of the climb is mostly 1 in 7, with one sharp pitch of 1 in 6 about one-third of the way up. The corners are quite easy and the surface excellent throughout.

Soon the second gradient, the final long hill before reaching the almost level run to Troutbeck, is gained. This is over 300 yards long, and the steepest bits are encountered on each of the three

wide bends. The lower of these has a gradient of 1 in 6 and, after about 50 yards of 1 in 8, the second bend rises to 1 in $6\frac{1}{4}$ and continues for fully 60 yards at that average. On the third and final corner there comes the most severe portion encountered on this way up to Kirkstone Pass, namely, about 12 yards varying from 1 in $5\frac{1}{3}$ to 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. The finishing "straight" is 1 in 8. In a short time the lofty levels are reached, and the way wends across the terraced front of Wansfell, with all the wondrous southerly beauty of Windermere spread below.

Then the deep valley of Troutbeck appears far down on the right, and the mile-long village itself is soon entered at the point where the road from Troutbeck Bridge comes up on the right.

An ancient farm-house, dated 1666, stands on the right. On the opposite side there is an alluring peep of an old Elizabethan mansion, with its circular ivied chimneys and its quaintly beautiful leaded windows, the whole yew-shaded and sombrely secluded. The sight at once suggests a halt. Moreover, the full length of the village street demands leisurely travel, and a "crack" with some local authority will tend to prove amusing. The motoring party may probably be asked the old Troutbeck riddle about the 300 bulls, the 300 bridges, and the 300 "bobbies." The explanation is that the township was divided into three hundreds, and to each hundred belonged a bull, a bridge, and a policeman. Then there is the Gallows How below the village to which the barons of

Kendal used to send their miscreants for their last journey, and Spying How where the discovery of numerous human remains indicated their burying-place.

Troutbeck never tires of the tale of its wonderful giant, Hugh Hird, who was "ower big and bad to get into t' kirk door." This great man monopolized a house, now in ruins on the upper left-hand side of the roadway, and refused entrance to the proper tenant. He was amazingly strong and knew no law but strength. When a horde of Scottish raiders were defeated single-handed, his fame spread to London, the more so as he held Crown property perforce. When asked regarding the diet he used to build up such great proportions, he answered, "Ah tak poddish that thick that a mouse could walk ower them dry-shod, an' the sunny side of a wedder" (the greater part of a sheep) "when ah can get it." King Edward VI was so astounded at his feats of strength that he gave him his full liberty and the Troutbeck property also. Hird's later years were spent pulling up trees to clear the fell-side. He died at forty-two years of age, and the natives say that his grave can be seen by the "hog house."

Then, as one drives slowly through the straggling village, the numerous old houses, many of them unsafe to enter, will be noticed. One on the right, about a hundred yards after the junction of the roads, has some peculiar sections of the flooring still remaining, and much ancient wood-work may be noticed. In passing along the street

the thought occurs that here the steam-car enthusiast is well catered for. He may take in supplies at any of the thirteen water-troughs that line the roadway. They seem to be worthily dedicated, but one almost wonders whether the supply of saints will last the length of the village.

The sight of the Mortal Man Inn on the right diverts one's thoughts to its well-known sign, fortunately mortal also, and now no longer visible. An ivy-hung house on the right just before reaching the inn is that in which the Hogarth family lived. The uncle of the great painter achieved most fame hereabouts. His satirical poetry dealt largely with local matters and moralities, and as an old lady pointedly remarked, "he did mair good in t' place than the parson"! At the upper or Townhead end of Troutbeck Village there is a somewhat steep but short descent to join the ordinary road which has come up from Cook's Corner and Windermere. The Queen's Head Inn is only a few yards lower down on the right, and it is three miles thence to the Traveller's Rest on the top of the pass.

But now comes the call of the heights. The shades of sycamore are left behind; the larches and grey rocks lie ahead, with the road winding ever upwards. The valley bottom sinks into the depths, and far across on the opposite mountain wall the Garburn Pass, as yet unconquered by petrol, strikes slantingly up the breast of the High Street massif. The shapely cone of Ill Bell breaks up the long stretch of skyline. Farther northwards Froswick

dominates the wild recesses of Troutbeck Head, with the strangely named summit of John Bell's Banner waving a purple greeting on the western flank.

About half a mile beyond the Queen's Head, or the junction of the roads, comes the steepest hill on the ordinary way up Kirkstone Pass. It is quite 250 yards in length, and after a gradual approach of 1 in 8 the gradient rises to 1 in 6 and 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. Then, on the upper bend, some 40 yards or so of 1 in 5 try many an over-heated engine severely. Above this special spot the ascent, though gradual, is fairly continuous, with the exception of one slight descent.

There the road bids farewell to the Troutbeck Valley, and swerves upward to the left across Wansfell. Some may be glad to have left behind those thrilling downward glimpses of the fell-side escarpments with the roofs of the tiny farm-houses seen, sunny and peaceful-looking, 500 feet below in the depths of the dale. May they always rest thus undisturbed by motors! Yet not long ago they narrowly missed an unexpected visitation; fortunately, the tragic accident happened 300 yards higher up the pass.

Ere long the view on the left down Stockdale towards Ambleside is disclosed, and on the final easier grade the steeper road thence is seen away below, slanting sinuously up the famous "Struggle." This is the name given by coaching-folk to the last half-mile of the direct Ambleside road below Kirkstone Inn. Six horses are needed to pull up the heavy coach-loads. On a fine morning during

the season the vicinity of the Traveller's Rest will probably be so restless with the turmoil of traffic that the motorist may be glad to hurry on towards Ullswater.

In passing it may be noticed that the height of the "highest inhabited house in England" is given as 1476 feet. Yet those who trouble to climb the splendid mass of the Red Screes opposite the inn may look across to a higher licensed house in the same district. This is the Shaw Inn (1500 feet), which stands on the side of the main road over the moors between Penrith and Alston. Three other notable houses, likewise "the highest inhabited," are the Tan Hill in Yorkshire (1727 feet), and the Buxton favourites, The Cat and Fiddle (1690 feet), and the Traveller's Rest at Flash Bar (1535 feet).

Reverting to details of the ascent of Kirkstone Pass by the most used route from Cook's Corner, it may be advisable to mention that this well-marked turn to the right is noticed two-thirds of a mile from Windermere Station on the main road to Ambleside. The way when once entered upon is unmistakable. Whenever the aggressively ugly and lofty stone walls permit, some magnificent views are revealed as the road winds gently upwards amongst stately oaks and sycamores.

But the hand of the mansion-maker is laid heavily on the slopes above Windermere; his handiwork nowadays dominates that scene which Christopher North described as "the most splendid in all England." Alas! it can no longer be said

that "the whole landscape is of a sylvan kind, parts of it are so laden with woods that you only see here and there a wreath of smoke, but no houses, and could almost believe that you are gazing on the primeval forests."

The splendidly surfaced road descends slightly into the bed of the main Troutbeck Valley, and the church with its curious lych-gate is soon passed. The Troutbeck Village, which those who have come up from Low Wood know so well, is seen far up above extending along the mountain-side. Just below it is the Ing Meadow, so much frequented in the earlier bull-fighting days. It was here that the notorious Orrest Head bull, owned by Josiah Brown, met its match. The farmer at Troutbeck Park also owned a huge animal, and a great fight was at last arranged. Josiah arrived astride his own bull. The battle was tremendous. It raged amidst roars that must have stirred the foundations of some of the old cottages, but the Orrest Head animal fell before its opponent. It was finally presented by the victor to the poor of Troutbeck dale.

But nowadays only the roar of the hill-curved motor stirs the mountain echoes, for 300 yards beyond Troutbeck Church the gradients begin to assert their power. An astonishingly sudden S bend is approached by a stretch of 1 in 10, and round the first turn the road rises as steeply as 1 in 6, and continues for almost a hundred yards at an incline of quite 1 in 7. Thence the climb

up to Queen's Head is almost continuous, though an approach of 1 in 12 allows speed to be gained for the half-way bend where 1 in $6\frac{1}{2}$ is the severest pitch. Just above the Queen's Head the way from Low Wood through Troutbeck Village comes in, and thence the three-mile climb to the top of the pass has been described.

To help in the comparison between the two best known ways up Kirkstone Pass it is interesting to note that in the upper, continuous, three-mile climb from Queen's Head to the inn there is a rise of 930 feet. On the other hand, from Ambleside direct the distance is only $2\frac{7}{8}$ miles and the height climbed is 1300 feet. Also on this latter route there is nearly half a mile of travelling where no height is gained.

The writer would venture the suggestion that the ascent of Kirkstone Pass direct from Ambleside provides the best test-hill in Lakeland, or even in the country. In connexion with this opinion it must be remembered that the surface is normal, there is never the sliminess of Lynton Hill or the roughness of Honister Pass. True, it does not possess a 1 in 3 gradient like Honister or even the 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$ of Red Bank, but, in contradistinction to the freak hills, it is practically a main road up which, in the season, the coaches travel daily.

With the exception of one slight level stretch, the first two miles are of almost continuous steepness. They may be conveniently divided into three sections. The beginning of the Kirkstone Pass road proper is not from the main road from

Grasmere just as it enters Ambleside, but from the open space just before reaching the Salutation Hotel. Almost opposite the booking office of the public motor service the way lies up a somewhat narrow street after crossing the bridge over the river Stock. Soon the junction of four roads is noticed, and straight ahead the steep rise is unmistakable. This may be regarded as the first pitch and the easiest of the three, but in wet and slippery weather it will soon sort out the weaklings. It is quite a hundred yards long and, as is usual when houses line the side of a hill, seems steeper than it is in reality. Most of the incline borders on the 1 in 6, but about half-way up there is a steeper portion of 1 in $5\frac{1}{4}$. The finish up to the level of the old Ambleside Church of St. Ann's is mostly 1 in 8.

After about 100 yards of fairly level roadway, the second pitch begins. This mounts mostly at an incline of 1 in 6 up to and beyond the first corner, and after swerving to the left near the cottages there are about 6 yards of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ on the upper part of the curve. Soon a less trying grade of 1 in 10 for nearly 50 yards gives an approach to a sharp ascent of 60 yards up to a branching corner on the right. There is a 6-yard section here of 1 in 5 ere the angle of steepness eases off gradually to 1 in 12.

At the second telegraph-post beyond the corner on the right the third and longest pitch begins with about 70 yards of 1 in $5\frac{3}{4}$. Soon there is a short step of 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$, and for nearly 100 yards there are continuous inclines of 1 in 5 and 1 in 6 to overcome. By a cottage on the right there is a somewhat easier

slope, but almost immediately comes a 150-yard rise with an average of 1 in 5 and a finishing 12-yard incline of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$. This soon assumes a milder angle; the finishing 300-yard climb up to the level run below the "Struggle" is mostly up a gradient of 1 in 8.

The backward view here of Windermere, and the Vale of Rothay all peak-encircled, is magnificent, but it is to be feared that few motorists see anything but the mountainous-looking final struggle up to the tiny, white inn overhead. It was here that many an astonished driver in the autumn trials of 1912 asked how many more mountains there were to climb. The confronting problem certainly looks severe. But things are not always what they seem on the heights, and the final half-mile will scarcely trouble those who have overcome the lower portion.

The corners are none of them troublesome. The lower half of the hill is mostly 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in 6. Then comes a midway 12-yard step of 1 in $4\frac{1}{4}$ —the steepest bit of the whole of Kirkstone Pass. This leads up to a steady rise of 1 in 5, which continues for fully 50 yards. The finishing 30-yard stretch is 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in $5\frac{3}{4}$.

And now one turns away from the rich, calm beauty of Windermere lying far below, asleep in the morning sunshine amidst her lake-side mountains. The contrast between this quietness and the wild ruggedness of the gap of Kirkstone is more than can be expressed in words. Yet that downward flight to Brotherswater through the jaws of the pass is



BROTHERSWATER AND THE KIRKSTONE PASS

BROTHERSWATER INN WITH THE ROAD CLOSE BY MAY BE DISTINGUISHED IN THE CENTRE OF THE PHOTOGRAPH. CAUDALE FELL RISES ON THE LEFT, AND RED SCREES ON THE RIGHT

delightful. The wayside is aglow with parsley fern. The long, bright lines of the yellow and the starry saxifrage flash past in the shadow of the grey walls, which seem to keep the riotous roadway from straying into the rocky tumult of the accompanying mountain gorge. Ruddy Red Screes, perchance afire with the vermilion and gold of autumn, looks grim and adamant as ever, despite those torrent-torn furrows that bare his very heart of granite.

Then stony Cove Pike appears on the right, beyond the nearer heathery sweep of Caudale Moor, and the green levels draw upwards swiftly. Brotherswater, so often square and unpicturesque, seems almost beautiful on the approach thereto from the bottom of the pass, with Place Fell full glorious in confronting grandeur.

On the right the topmost crest of High Street, tipped with the whiteness that heralds the on-coming winter, looks chill and gloomy. Little those Romans must have cared for this desolate Brigantia! How many a mighty Marius and Claudius of Agricola's North-bound host must have cursed the fates that sent them into this savage land of wild wolves, and men even wilder still in the fight for their mountain homes! How often they must have longed for the pleasures of Rome once more! One wonders if they noted the wondrous pageant of Nature's glory which nowadays draws men into this modern Elysium. Perchance with death lurking at every turn they saw little of the gorgeous massing of the clouds, or the sunset splendours in the sky, of the soft shadows

skimming the lakes below, or the wintry grandeur crowning the heights. But the pomp of war is long past; the glories of the eternal hills and the open sky remain as of yore.

The road tends ever downwards along Brotherswater, past the entrances to the lovely valleys of Dovedale and Deepdale, that cut far on the left into the easterly front of Helvellyn's vassal peaks. Then, after crossing the Goldrill Beck by its awkward bridge, some grassy knolls are traversed ere the narrow entrance to Patterdale Village curbs one's speeding, and Ullswater appears amongst the trees beyond the alluvial levels. The road winds amidst woodland prettiness around the foot of St. Sunday's Crag: beyond the church there is a passing glimpse of Helvellyn's Striding Edge dominating the depths of Grisedale, and suddenly the lake-shore lies alongside. Giant oaks overshadow the way until, on the left, the passing of St. Patrick's Well suggests the origin of the name of Patterdale.

The next broad valley on the left is Glenridding, and at its foot lies the village of the same name. The sight of the Ullswater Hotel and the adjacent steamer landing may suggest a halt; for, of all ways of seeing this lake of the three reaches, the sail to Pooley Bridge and back is probably best of all.

Those who resist this temptation will soon enter the shade of the Stybarrow Woods. Ere long the road approaches the lake-shore again, and the sudden dip of a steep descent heralds the approach

to the unique corner where the great projecting cliff would almost seem to dispute the right of way. The name of Glenridding, the valley so recently quitted, is possibly evidence of our earliest Scottish visitors, who, when in these parts, seldom went empty away. But, if tradition be true, there was one occasion when the raiders failed. The vicinity of Stybarrow Crag recalls the story of the great fight and the desperate doings of the dalesmen under John Mounsey, who was afterwards acclaimed King of Patterdale. It was here that the savage Scots were shown a bold front. Mounsey crowded his men into the narrow gap and on the rocks overhead in such conspicuous and determined array as to arouse doubts of success in the minds of the invaders. Without venturing to attack the dalesmen, who were armed with pitchforks, scythes, and other equally effective weapons, the Scots turned tail and retreated to Penrith. Perhaps the watery depths below scared them away. However, whatever the cause, of the defenders

“Never a man was slain ;
They ate their meat and drank their drink,
And all turned merrily home again.”

In those days the packhorse route went over the top of the crag, but now the road skirts the base of the cliff. Close by is the scene of one of the most famous pictures of the district, but few actually find it. The great mass of Stybarrow Crag does not show in the well-known photograph. The foreground which deceives so many is simply a lower mass of rock, which becomes exaggerated

by its nearness to the lens. If the car is left on the top of the steep hill just before reaching Stybarrow Crag, a slight descent may be made to a woodland path above the shore-line. There will be found the scene that photographs so well, but which in nature is prone to be disappointing.

After leaving this pretty corner of Ullswater, the road runs over a richly timbered spur of Glencoin Fell, and soon sinks shorewards again. It crosses the end of Glencoin, in whose wooded stretch the farmhouse called Seldom Seen will justify its name so far as motorists are concerned. All the while there are revelations of beauty at every turn of the twisting roadway. This follows the shore-line closely, now in the silent shade of fir and oak, anon out on a pebbly point where the wind sings soft symphonies amongst the sedges. Birk Fell and Place Fell on the right still rise grandly, but far ahead the lake is seen winding away into the level pasture-lands. Yet backward glances still show the mountains in full splendour. St. Sunday's Crag and Helvellyn make the master masses as the road approaches the divergence of the ways. That straight onwards leads to Pooley Bridge and Penrith (11 miles); the one on the left is the usual coaching route over the moors to Keswick (14 miles).

Those who wish to extend their day's run and see more of Ullswater's milder charms may prefer to continue eastwards along the lake-shore. Those lovely and almost unknown valleys of Martindale, and Boardale, beyond Howtown on the opposite

side of the lake, may attract attention. A remarkably good road allows these secluded spots to be approached and explored from Pooley Bridge. The quiet little hotel at Howtown is a favourite resort with anglers, who there can make best use of some free fishing which Ullswater offers.

For the archæologist, Penrith, of course, has abounding interest, but some may not care to stray so far out of sight of the lakes. An alternative would be to visit Dacre Castle and the interesting old church which stands near it. In this case the main highway would be forsaken about half a mile short of Pooley Bridge, and the narrower road on the left entered upon, which continues through Dalemain Park to Stainton. However, to reach Dacre it is necessary to turn sharply to the left before reaching Dalemain, and thus gain the foot of the Dacre Banks, below which the old-world village shelters. The Castle is now partly used as a farm-house, but the genial tenants are glad to show visitors the famous "Room of the Three Kings." It was here that Constantine, King of Scotland, and his son Eugenius, King of Cumberland, met King Athelstan in congress to adjust their rights. It is a pleasant adventure to climb the old spiral stone staircase, and enjoy the extensive view from the top of the tower. In the church there are some curious stone carvings and ancient crosses that should not be overlooked.

Then those bound for Keswick might drive up the steep incline of Dacre Banks, where in due season a wealth of wild guelder rose forms the

hedgerows. Less than two miles from the village the main road between Penrith and Keswick is joined, where a wonderful beech avenue affords cool shade on the hottest of days.

Reverting to the more usual route at the Gowbarrow Park Corner, where the property of the National Trust includes the ugly shed that adorns the entrance, the splendidly surfaced incline of Park Brow first attracts the motorist's attention. The views of the head of Ullswater during the first part of the ascent are magnificent. They are unequalled by those from any other motor-way in the vicinity.

Rather less than a mile from the foot of the hill a stile may be noticed, placed for the purpose of crossing the new wall on the right-hand side of the road. For motoring parties this affords the quickest and easiest approach to Aira Force. The car may be left by the wayside or in a road-man's clearing on the left a short distance farther up the hill. The waterfall is one of the most impressive in Lakeland, and the upper glen roofed with silver birch and flanked by lush bracken is attractive by reason of its quiet and unappreciated beauty.

From the summit of Park Brow, above the Aira Force digression, it is a short downward run to Dockray. At this place there comes a sharp swerve to the right across the bridge over the Aira Beck, which comes hurrying down out of the savage clutches of the Helvellyn Dodds, now rising sombre and bleak on the left. The road narrows whilst rounding a hidden corner, then

mounts gently upwards to the little church of Matterdale, which stands on the right, sheltered on this lonely height by the overshadowing plumes of one, great-limbed larch. The inside of the church is in keeping with its stern surroundings; one of the old oaken beams bears the date 1573. Its service is decidedly high church, for it is one of the highest in the land; the weather-stained structure stands quite 1000 feet above sea-level.

Ullswater is now 500 feet below, but thanks to the new and splendid highway, so gradual has been the ascent that few might realize the fact. Matterdale End is the next village. It is noteworthy for its awkward left-hand turn at the foot of a steep hill, which ultimately uplifts one to the crest of the Matterdale Common. Great Mell Fell, almost ugly in its uniform roundness, stands above the moor on the right, somewhat like a huge thimble in shape. On the left rise wild wastes of heathery peat-land, where the white cotton-grass lies like a mantle of morning mist upon the slopes.

They lead the eye upwards to Helvellyn, far extended and rounded in outline, but grand in its torrent-carved ruggedness. Then on the top of the long hill leading down to Troutbeck Station, Saddleback is revealed with all its wealth of tapering ridge, and farther westwards the pale, purple Pikes of Grisedale and Causey, and the Grassmoor group, rise beyond the valley of the Derwent.

It is a wonderful scene from this lofty highway,

1125 feet above sea-level, and in the earlier coaching-days it was here that one of the most famous of the old characters, John Sheldon, the Troutbeck coachman, rested his team. Meanwhile, in his most polite "Cumberland," he told off the names of the mountains. On occasion he would chaff some innocent passenger, but generally Father John, as he was called, mixed interesting local information in his recitals, and the following was heard on one occasion :—

"Yes, gents! this is Matterdale Common we are now crossing. That's the tippy twop of Helvellyn away above the white cottage. Grand spot for the sheep up theer, plenty of laal grass and lichens for the hogs."

"Hogs? I don't see any hogs," said an elderly passenger, whom John, with his usual quick discernment, soon discovered was a retired pork butcher who was posing as "a true-born aristocrat."

"Well," said John, "not pigs, but you see yon small sheep running about; they are a special breed, very hardy, very sweet-eating, and are called 'hogs' for the first year. When stripped of their fleece they are called 'twinters,' and when sheared next time they are called 'thrunters,' and that's gaily near to grunters."

The wide moors between Ullswater and Keswick possess a reputation for utter dullness and bleakness. Doubtless this arises from the coaching fashion, but to motorists the splendid roads are ample recompense for the lack of that continuous

beauty which average Lake-country habitués expect. There is nothing dull about the swift descent to Troutbeck, which by the way should not be confused with the Westmorland place of the same name above Windermere. At the Cumberland Troutbeck the bridge over the railway is crossed and the sharp turn to the left is negotiated, remembering meanwhile the speedy main-road traffic that often passes this spot, which is close by the ninth mile-stone from Keswick ; it is also the ninth from Patterdale and Penrith.

Shortly after leaving Troutbeck comes a splendid two-mile "coast" down into Scales Bottom, with Saddleback in front gaining in bulk and grandeur. Then the road ascends this mountain's lower slopes, and beyond Scales there is little except downhill running to Threlkeld, which is unmistakable by reason of its toy-like church on the left.

Those wishing to return direct to Ambleside or the Windermere district may turn off just beyond the dangerous corner in the upper part of the village and travel southwards through the Vale of St. John, narrow in shape and also narrow in its roads. In some places two average cars can scarcely pass. It has fallen to the writer's luck to have to toss, and lose, for a place through the gateway of the nearest available field. This may entail a lengthy reverse, the while one wonders how much longer the sorely needed widening of the valley-way can require for completion.

For some years to come the motorist who

drives through the Vale of St. John will perforce see more of the road than the beautiful scenery. By the small village near the end of the vale there may be noticed a broad roadway on the right. Those who wish to see the finest view of Thirlmere and Helvellyn should turn and follow this road straight ahead, crossing cautiously, almost at right angles, the main trunk road between Keswick and Windermere. Raven Crag towers grandly in front, ere the embankment at the north end of Thirlmere is crossed, and beyond this, when once the left-hand turn is taken, the southward way is unmistakable.

Doubtless most motoring parties will prefer to visit Keswick, and probably Derwentwater; thus from Threlkeld they will follow the main road, climbing Burn's Brow, with its 1 in 6 gradient, on the way. Some may wish to see the Druids' Circle *en route*. This is the most perfect and most beautifully situated Druidical temple in the country, and is more accessible to motorists than any other in the district. The way lies up a narrow road on the left, about a quarter of a mile after passing the third mile-stone away from Keswick. The turning-point may be noticed shortly after rounding the sharp corner where the main road crosses Naddle Beck. The stone circle stands in a field on the left, practically at the top of the slight incline. The by-road can in due course be followed downwards to Keswick.

Those who are paying a passing visit and wish to see the prettiest part of Derwentwater

close at hand should take the road to Friars' Crag ; but for a general view, there is scarcely anything finer than that obtained from Castlerigg on the way back to Ambleside.

In this latter connexion it is useful for those with heavily laden cars of moderate power to note that, if they ask for the Ambleside road, they will be directed to the hilliest way out of the valley. This entails the steep climb up the Manor Brow, with its awkward turns and a gradient of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. Numerous cars have a troublous time here, quite unaware that there is another route of only moderate steepness. At the outset this makes use of the Penrith road for about half a mile ; in fact, one returns thus far on the road that has been used in the journey from Ullswater. Then a sharp turn on the right can scarcely be overlooked ; it is well marked with a distance-post.

The way upwards and onwards is straightforward. Just beyond the fourth mile-stone the excellent road branches off to the west side of the Thirlmere Valley, and soon joins that from the Vale of St. John close to the embankment.

Then perchance the southward way is followed in the cool shade of evening 'neath those great westerly crags, with Helvellyn catching the last far-flung rays of the seaward-setting sun. The Pass of Dunmail seems solemnly sombre at night, with the ebon peaks standing around as though on guard over that lonely relic of ancient times. The day's traffic is over-past ; only stream-voices, breeze-borne in soft cadences, stir the silence of

the sleeping hills. Even Grasmere and Rydal's busy, highway crowd has ceased from troubling, and until the lights of Ambleside flash through the leafy avenue there is little sign of the busy world that here makes holiday.

CHAPTER VIII
IN AND AROUND THE VALE OF
DERWENTWATER

“Earth has not anything to show more fair ;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne’er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !”

WORDSWORTH

THERE is a Cumbrian proverb “Good stuff laps up in laal bundles,” which is another way of saying that the biggest need not be the best. This is aptly applicable in many ways to the Lake country. From the mountains, where the “laal black-faced uns”—the Herdwick sheep—illustrate the proverb most succulently, down to the lakes and valleys, of which the largest are scarcely the most beautiful, the fact is so plainly portrayed that he who runs, or even motors, may read.

It is now recognized that Derwentwater, though one of the smallest, is one of the two most beautiful lakes in the district. Whether its companion in this distinction be Windermere or Ullswater can be left as an argument for others of more open mind to settle. However, the charm

of the valley is undoubted and, in so much surrounding loveliness, the joys of the open car are irresistible.

The ways of some who hurriedly rush up the dale and back again, closely hooded or "limousined," remind one of Gilpin, the earliest discoverer of Lakeland. He found the scenery so oppressive that the carriage-blinds were drawn down closely, and Derwentwater in due course figured in his description as "Beauty lying in the lap of Horror; for what," he wrote, "could be more beautiful than the lake and what more horrible than the mountains?" And now all the world on wheels ventures into the "jagged jaws of Borrowdale," with no thoughts as to "their closing upon them," and no misgivings except for the lives of their tyres on the oft-times jagged roadway.

Yet, after all, in the summer-time it is a splendid road that greets the motorist as he leaves Keswick behind and below. St. John's Church, angular amongst drooping curves of elms and beeches, sinks, in the backward glance, under the o'er-topping height of Skiddaw. But the forward view appeals insistingly. The deep-set Lake of Derwentwater, as yet almost hidden by richly timbered shores and scattered islands, leads the eye to the southerly mountain recesses. Castle Crag, the pine-fringed "tooth," stands wedged in the Jaws of Borrowdale, whilst above and beyond it the dome-like crest of Great End buttresses our highest mountain mass grandly. Scawfell Pike, the second slightly pointed peak to the right of



AN APRIL MORNING ON DERWENTWATER

THE LAST OF THE WINTER SNOWS ARE SEEN ON SCAWFELL PIKE IN THE DISTANCE—THE “JAWS OF BORROWDALE” SINK BELOW,
WITH CASTLE CRAG THE “TOOTH OF BORROWDALE,” BETWEEN

Great End, is somewhat dwarfed by its greater remoteness.

To the left the foliage-mantled, rocky heights of Brund Fell, Gowder Crag, and the Lodore Fells harmonize pleasantly with the less rugged westerly mountains which, with their undulating outlines, indicate more of the sedimentary formation than the volcanic. Maiden Moor, immediately to the right of the "Jaws of Borrowdale," pushes forth some fine syenitic buttresses, but the grassy contour of Catbells marks the slaty formation, and farther north, Causey Pike—with its tea-cosy-like summit—forms the frontal retaining slope of the intervening Vale of Newlands. The more jagged distant outline beyond the head of this dale is that of the Red Pike and High Stile group. They rise at the farther or south-westerly side of the Buttermere Valley. To the north of Causey Pike, which is really a corruption of the word "causeway," arising from the Roman road which ran over the range, Grisedale Pike may be distinguished by the crater-like hollow in its easterly face.

Such are the most important mountains that attract notice as one sweeps over the first pastoral hillock outside Keswick, and enters the shade of Castle Head woods. This curious little rocky core, for thus it is, despite its mantle of timber, was largely concerned in the making of the Lake district. Geologists tell us that in ages past it was a more or less active volcano at least three times the height of Skiddaw. Once on a day, in ultra-boisterous mood, under high compression

most probably, it blew its head off, and, with exhaust vast and voluminous, began the formation of many of the adjacent mountains. Nowadays, peaceful little Castlehead, the remaining central base of the crater, affords the best lowland view of its surrounding, prehistoric handiwork.

The road now sinks to a little above the level of the lake, but peeps of Lord's Island, and perhaps sounds from the rookery, from which it derives the local name of Crow Island, recall the tragic story of 1715. The precipitous bulk of wood-hung Walla Crag, now dominating the roadway, is another link with those days when Lord Derwentwater lived on the island.

It was up the crag's central rift that his lady fled from the Keswick soldiery, carrying off her jewels in order to help to obtain the King's pardon. Her lord had been condemned to death by reason of his favouring the Pretender. As a child one was told that the white speck to the left of the Lady's Rake was the handkerchief left by Lady Derwentwater. No one dare bring it down. It was a boyish prank to climb up and discover that the relic was only a white painted rock which was annually re-coated. This custom died out for many years, but has recently been revived. This simple monument to memorize a brave deed should not be allowed to lapse; in those days of mountain terror it was no small feat to climb the wild front of Walla Crag. To this day the Aurora Borealis is referred to locally as "Lord Derwentwater's lights," because on the day of his execution there was a display

of unusual brilliance. Superstition somehow connected the two events.

Rather more than a mile from Keswick the road enters the Big Wood, and a canopy of inter-twisted greenery shuts out all but passing skyward peeps, of which the slabby escarpments of Walla Crag form part by reason of their closely impending loftiness. Giant beeches and elms o'ershadow the languorous, fir-wood depths, where the wood-pigeon drones drowsily and hosts of lake-shore insects, sun-shaded in the leafy avenue, hum lazily. All nature seems attuned to one's speed-curbed engine on this twisty, breeze-sheltered, and oft-times slimy roadway.

Moss-prankt Cat Ghyll flings out a passing chorus as one sweeps out under the open mountain-side, where far overhead the straight-cleft front of Falcon Crag cuts a solid wedge in the skyline. The great, grey cliff still echoes with the screeching of the hawks, and in nesting-time the peregrine falcons dispute fiercely for sole possession of the crag which bears their name.

The lake now shimmers through the leafy screen on the right, and at intervals there are open vistas across its widest breadth. Fir-crowned Rampsholm, where the wild garlics, or ramps, flourish pungently, is the nearer islet, and beyond it lies St. Herbert's Island of saintly memory. Soon after passing a gateway on the left, which opens on to an "unmotorable" mountain road that leads up to Ashness Bridge and Watendlath, there is a pleasing backward panorama of Skiddaw's extended line of peaks. The High Man cannot

be seen from Keswick, but now it assumes pride of place. Above the lake's westerly shore a water-spout of a few years ago left curious figurings on the front of the Barrow Mountain. The light-coloured scars on the heathery slope form the Witch's Hand, with scraggy fingers down-stretched. Still farther to the left the very tip of Causey Pike peeps with peculiar pertness over the somewhat featureless skyline of Catbells.

The road now rises slightly past the artificial beauties of Barrow House on the left, behind which the Barrow Falls plunge down a ferny gorge in a double leap of over 140 feet, and soon there comes a sudden revelation of Derwentwater's southern grandeur.

Here, at the head of the lake, simple nature is still unspoilt; there is nothing more beautiful in the whole of Lakeland. The road sinks to a level of only a few feet above the shore of Waterlily Bay, where the wind whispers amongst the brown rushes, and the lilies' broad, olive-green leaves sway to the water music on the pebbly beach. Then the bay is left behind, and a meadow, flower-full and fragrant, separates one from the reedy fore-shore. Wild columbines, purple tasselled, dance in the breeze, and orchids and rare ferns hide under briar-trailed bramble pergolas, whilst the air, disturbed by the car's slow flight, wafts a sweetness of honeysuckle and dainty Burnet roses.

An island of lofty alder amongst tall rushes adds to the beauty of the scene. Just beyond it, and where the teal ducks love to ride the wavelets

by the river's mouth, the Floating Island makes its appearance. Scientists disagree as to the cause of the phenomenon. It is generally supposed that the decomposing debris brought down by the Lodore torrent, which enters the lake here, is the cause of the island making its appearance. The natives hold the theory that it comes to the surface every seven years, but of recent times this has scarcely proved correct. An exceptionally dry season usually brings some portion or other of the island into view, but its full appearance fits better with the periodical theory. Is it not possible that a stream which falls over the cliffs of Gowder Crag and disappears in summer-time underground may have some connection with the existence of the Floating Island?

Three miles from Keswick the Lodore Hotel reminds one aggressively that the famous falls are close at hand. They are scarcely five minutes' walk from the road. The gorge and its surroundings always seem beautiful, but the falls themselves fail to live up to their world-wide reputation. Southey has made fine play with his adjectives: an example which is followed to-day in a less publishable form. In summer weather the Falls of Lodore are a disappointment to thousands.

But after three or four days of Cumbrian rain Southey's "roaring and pouring" rhymings are remarkably appropriate. At such times the loud-throated torrent dashes through the narrow neck of the gorge in one huge, hurrying phalanx of foam. It seems that the upstanding cliffs on either hand can scarce withstand the titanic rush of waters;

the noise is deafening. Even in Keswick this may be heard, and from any vantage-point thereabouts the gorge seems draped with a broad white curtain. Those who see Lodore at such a time will not be disappointed. It should be remembered by motorists that the falls diminish rapidly within an hour after the cessation of the downpour, and those staying in Keswick will find their power of swift travel most opportune.

Beyond Lodore the lake is left behind. On the left Shepherd's Crag overhangs the road strikingly : a fact which was tragically accentuated during the poet Gray's early visit to the Lakes, for a passing party were "stricken to death" by a falling boulder. In those days the near view of Borrowdale—the same as that which now greets one from the short, steep hill just after leaving Lodore—was described in the following manner : "Dark caverns yawn at its entrance, terrific as the wildness of a maniac, and disclose a narrow strait running up between mountains of granite that are shook into almost every possible form of horror, and resemble the accumulation of an earthquake, splintered, shivered, piled, amassed."

Modern travellers would simply describe the scene as beautiful, and should the motoring party encounter traffic on the succeeding downgrade, they may even see no beauty, but only the ugly awkwardness of the narrowing road. The crest of the next hill, crowned by a yew-shaded farmhouse much favoured by picnic parties, reveals a pretty view of Troutdale on the left, with Black

Crags, gully-seamed and sombre of colour, standing at its head. Borrowdale Hotel then marks the approach of an excellent straight-ahead run into the actual narrow jaws that give entrance into the heart of Borrowdale itself. Two corners, care-demanding in their abruptness, lead out on to the open hill-side, with Grange in sight in front and the curving river-bed of the Derwent below.

The air is seldom calm in this narrow gateway into the mountains, and Windy Corner is an apt name for the place where the road swerves out to the hill-crest above the river. When the wild sou'-wester sweeps through the gorge there is real peril in the air. On at least two occasions carriages have been blown off the road. One hair-breadth escape was really somewhat of a miracle, for only this word can describe the case where a closed vehicle with a passenger inside was flung over the slope, and into the raging torrent below. Though the damage was serious, no fatal results followed. In the stress of winter weather it is a common experience for a wandering motorist to be blown to a standstill here: one shudders to think what might happen should some of the palatial, top-heavy touring-cars of the summer season stray here during the wildest of winter storms.

On such days, when the quarry-workers at Honister say the "wind is in the crack," strong men have been caught and dashed to death. Great rocks, many tons' weight of solid slate, sometimes blow over the hills and far away. The Borrowdale men who brave these perils defy

scientific theories and say that the wind can be seen: an opinion which the writer shares. Let any doubters come and climb out of Borrowdale to Honister Crag when the "wind is in the crack." If they travel by car they may perchance at Windy Corner feel the terrific force of the grey, wraith-like power of air; it actually blurs the outline of the surrounding crags.

However, a summer day in Borrowdale has nothing so exciting to offer; the utter peacefulness of the dale is then its greatest charm. In old times it was strangely aloof from the outside world, and the conformation of the valley—"urn-like it is in shape, deep as an urn"—would easily account for this. Thus the abbots of Furness found Borrowdale useful as a sort of "strong room," and Grange was their granary or harvest store, where they kept the grain, tithes, and salt, the latter being obtained from Brandlehow. There was only the one opening to the north, and here the "close, crag-shored lake" was a strong defence against the border raiders and others. The mountain passes are, of course, a modern invention.

Castle Crag, which now so boldly confronts the motorist as he speeds along the straight road by the river-side, provided a splendid look-out station. The picturesque old bridge, grey in a world of grey—the colour which Nature paints the mountain-tops and all enduring things that are open to the sky—has quite a modern interest. It was doomed to be replaced by a triumph of modern

engineering skill, but a band of enthusiasts agreed that the grouting method should be tried. This has been a great success. The bridge is stronger than ever before. Its proved soundness has served as an example by which other similar relics have been renewed, whereby thousands of pounds have been saved, let us hope to be used for road improvement. This will probably be the motorist's thought as he jolts over the rough, rock-exposed sections that bring the recently improved highway under wheel. The winding way carries him 'midst heathery knolls and past a riot of debris from the slate quarries into the prettiest part of the whole dale.

On the left King's How, remote but regal in its vesture of crimsoned purple and gold, rises steeply. But to the right and in front, Eel Crag and Gate Crag are altogether more attractive in their tumult of tall cliffs and narrow gorges, where the mountain streams fling their silken threads in mid-air, to travel valleywards finally, through bracken dells and hazel copses, to the great waters beyond.

And now the white-trunked birches overshadow the roadway, and one glides close by the Derwent's side as it curves lazily under the wood-fringed flank of Castle Crag. The stillness and transparency of this sheltered stretch of water is altogether beautiful. There is a golden surface shimmer of o'erhanging larches, but down in the depths every rock and pebble is visible. All imaginable shades of blue and grey and green lie intermingled with orange and brown and red, whilst the moss-hung, shoreward pools are like sheets of beryl.

Travellers may sing the praises of Switzerland, but its mountain rivers are glacier-mud streams. In all the Alpine valleys there is nothing like the Borrowdale Derwent. Some lament our lack of glaciers and long for the domes of everlasting snow. Yet we have our clear flowing rivers with the light of heaven in their depths : we cannot have the glaciers also.

The narrow "gateway" is now passed, and in front stretches the level, strath-like dale with the hummocky mass of Glaramara assuming central place in the encircling mountains. Where the road turns to the left and leaves the river, a foot-path through a gate on the left hand provides the nearest approach to the Boulder Stone. This, the largest detached rock in England, is one of the popular sights in Lakeland. Innumerable authorities and others have argued regarding the transit of the stone to this spot ; they have compared it to all manner of things, from a peppermint drop to

"A stranded ship with keel upturned that rests
Careless of winds and waves."

An old Cumbrian dalesman has settled the question with characteristic terseness ; he says, "It's nobbut a girt staan what's tummelt fra t' crags abeun."

However, the view from the Boulder Stone is its best feature, and when seen therefrom the secluded nature of the Borrowdale Valley is obvious. A few years ago it used to be the fashion to tell all manner of rough tales about the Borrowdale

men, stories expressive of the superior enlightenment of the towns, and suggesting contempt for the dullness of the dales. The legend of the building of the big wall to keep in the cuckoo, who always brought the spring with him, is well known, and there are many others.

Some, however, savour of "town dullness." For instance, a famous yarn used to be told of the young man who was sent to Keswick with horse and sacks to bring back the lime for the building of the cuckoo wall. When the rain fell the lime smoked, and a hatful of water from under Grange Bridge only made matters worse. In the dalesman's mind fire and the "Evil One" were almost the same thing; so, feeling sure he had the "deil" in his sacks, he flung them into the river. But what Borrowdale man would have dreamt of using lime for the raising of a wall? Even to-day, observant travellers may notice that the building of walls with plain stones is not a lost art, which is an advantage when motorists have to pay for walls that they may, ineffectually, have attempted to jump. In cattle-blocked lanes it is well to remember that Cumberland walls are cheaper than cows.

The simple nature of the Borrowdale folk is not altogether a thing of the past, as a single personal experience will show. Only a few years ago, a well-known farmer's wife called to pay a small account, and apologized when she discovered that the statement was missing from her pocket, and she did not know the amount owing.

“Oh, never mind, Mrs. W——,” upspoke the head of the firm jokingly. “You just send in a blank cheque, and I’ll fill in the amount.”

“Varra weel,” was the prompt reply, and she hurried away to the market before more could be said.

Next morning, to our great surprise, came a blank cheque, and subsequent inquiry at the bank brought the information that anything up to £5000 might be honoured.

The main road, after leaving the approach to the Boulder Stone, soon rises to a rocky knoll whose crest has been blasted to permit of a passage. Then, beyond two sharp corners where some wonderful glacier-rounded rocks on the right may cause the backward view of Gate Crag and Castle Crag to be noticed, the level bed of the valley opens out prettily in front. Glaramara is still all-important in front, but to the right of it the Pass of Sty Head is now revealed, buttressed by Great End and Scawfell Pike on the left, and Great Gable on the right. On the other or easterly side of Glaramara is the branch valley of Langstrath, which gives access to the Stake Pass leading Langdale-wards. Neither of these passes is suitable for anything on wheels.

The road now dips into the lowest part of the dale, and a sight of the curious, flat-topped stone wall on the right may remind some of their flood-time adventures in the dale. This spot is known as Bowdering End. Motorists who perforce leave their car in the water may be glad of the hint to

walk dry-shod along the top of the wall, if help should be required from Rosthwaite, which is less than a mile away. This intervening bit of "curly" road is gradually being straightened out, but one astonishing S turn still, now and again, provides repairs for the Keswick garages.

The motorist will find little worth his attention in Rosthwaite itself, excepting its blind corners and narrow alley ways, where expensive fowls wander, on suicide intent. Once safely through the village, there is a fine glimpse up the Langstrath Valley, with Eagle Crag, bold and wild-looking enough to justify its name. It is only fifty years since the eagles built here annually, and there are still old men in the dale who can tell stirring tales of efforts to destroy the savage plunderers of their stock. It was a perilous experience to be lowered over the cliff, a prey meanwhile to the ferocious and frequent attacks of the parent birds; but in later years the Eagle Crag eyrie seldom escaped annual destruction.

This trouble caused the birds to settle themselves on the crags above Seathwaite, and finally after many years they were chased across the Scawfell range to Eskdale. One of these eagles once carried off a Seathwaite sheep-dog, but the young shepherd arrived in time to make use of his gun. The shot took effect, and the dog, much damaged on the head, was rescued. The eagle vanished, but was found afterwards above Stake Pass in a starving condition, for its beak had been split by the shot and the tongue was set fast in the cleft. The capture was no easy matter, but after

a speedy recovery the bird became so violent that it was necessarily destroyed. This was the last of the Borrowdale eagles, yet quite recently stray specimens are said to have been seen in Upper Eskdale and on the Kentmere side of High Street. Would that they might find sanctuary amongst the Thirlmere crags!

Those who wish to see more of Eagle Crag at close quarters, and explore those wonderful rocky pools in the Langstrath Beck so beloved of bathers, may turn off to the left at the sixth mile-post from Keswick. The picturesque little hamlet of Stone-thwaite, less than a mile away, marks the end of this branch way.

The main road turns to the right at the mile-post, and now leads straight into the heart of the higher mountains. Honister Pass may be seen winding up the open fell-side on the right, and the odd-looking obelisk on the skyline is the drum-house connected with one of the slate quarry inclines. Seatoller, snugly ensconced amongst the trees that hide the beginning of the pass, next attracts attention. Some may choose to turn to the right, pass through the hamlet, and climb by the new road to Honister Hause for the sake of seeing the wonderful view of the huge crag.

Then, if an inspection of the road on the Buttermere side is first made on foot, they will doubtless choose to return to Borrowdale. Of its kind, Honister Pass has the best scenery and the worst motor road in Britain.

After passing through the gateway the valley

road beyond Seatoller deteriorates somewhat during the $1\frac{3}{4}$ -mile journey to Seathwaite. Yet the pebbly surface is kind to tyres, and all would do well to visit the quaint, little, old-world hamlet, which will doubtless recover its glory of former days when the highway over Sty Head Pass becomes an established fact. Engrossing as is the twisting, gate-barred road, the magnificent peeps of gully-seamed Great End, now overhead and in front, will probably rouse enthusiasm. Seen in his winter coat and crimsoned in sunrise glow, the rugged old peak is all-magnificent. He stands up and takes the morning like a veritable Alpine giant.

Through sparse meadows, with the Derwent still alongside, one threads the stony way under the shadow of the hill on the right, where the famous yew trees wage a losing battle against the elements. Now comes the end of civilization in this land of mountain and flood. The few low-built houses, white and grey, only add to the scene of wild loneliness.

But Seathwaite was not always solitary. Those debris heaps on an outlying buttress of Great Gable are evidences of busier times, when the world-famous black-lead mines were worked. The scarred mountain-side and a few tumbled huts are all that remain to remind us that in this lonesome spot was originated our modern black-lead pencil. The mine, the only one of its kind in Europe, was opened in 1710, and a special Act of Parliament had to be passed for the protection of the workings.

Fortunes were made by lead-smuggling. Nowadays, no Borrowdale lead is obtained, and Seathwaite is noted for its collie dogs and its rain. The former may be described as all bark and no bite; but the latter, sleet-mixed and wind-driven before a wild southerly gale, has both bark and bite for the mountain traveller who faces its rigour on the bleak Pass of Sty Head.

Seathwaite is famous as being the wettest place in England, and few come to Lakeland without taking a keen and perchance practical interest in this question. Thus it may be noted that the wettest spot is not actually in Seathwaite itself, but nearly two miles away, and high up on High House Crag at a place known as The Sty. Here the average, annual rainfall is over 200 inches. The rainfall at Seathwaite itself is usually about 60 inches less, or 140 inches; and over the rest of Lakeland the average is a little more than a third of the latter figure—namely, 50 inches.

There are several official rain-gauges placed on the heights around Seathwaite. Their position is kept secret. Some have been destroyed, and only last year the gauge near Sprinkling Tarn was stolen. The three most interesting Government gauges are those on The Sty. Incidentally it may be mentioned that “sty” or “stee” is the Cumbrrian word for a ladder—a strikingly apt description of the tier-like formation of the mountain on the Borrowdale side of Sty Head Pass.

The three gauges are officially known as D, C, and B, and they are lettered thus to conform with

the order of approach from Seathwaite. Young Simpson Richardson of Seathwaite Farm has charge of the gauges, and at least once a month, in fair weather and foul, he visits them all and takes monthly records. At times it is a decidedly rough and wet walk, but he can say with truth, "Nay! Ah've nivver yet missed a reading!"

There is one curious and interesting feature about the three gauges on The Sty, and that is the confined area in which the wettest record is made. This consists of a strip of mountain-side about 250 yards long and a few yards broad, and outside this centre there is immediately a great variation. Another gauge in close proximity shows a decrease of 60 inches. Doubtless, the conformation of the Scawfell massif, and its situation with regard to the savage, sea-borne gales which spend their fury amidst its heights, has much to do with the excessive humidity on the Seathwaite side of the range. The dale has the form of a huge natural cup, and the record gauges seem, as it were, to catch the rain as it pours over the brim into the depths of the great basin. If there is moisture anywhere in Lakeland during any degree of west or south winds it will be raining on The Sty. It is a common experience to walk over the Sty Head Pass from Wastdale with dry clothes until a certain section of the Borrowdale side is approached. Seathwaite and saturation point are usually reached simultaneously.

And now, though the white-foamed waters of Sour Milk Ghyll glisten in a wealth of sunshine,

a dull greyness, perchance, gathers on the southerly heights. A cloud no bigger than a man's hand sails over the gap on The Sty. This is the dalesman's weather-glass, which he calls the "Tubman." Should the cloud sink into the dale, there will be rain within twelve hours; but if it drifts upwards to vanish beyond the easterly shoulder of Great End, fine weather will continue in the rest of Lakeland, though Seathwaite may within an hour or two replenish its rain-gauges. Afar off the movements of the "Tubman" on Scawfell's northerly front will be watched most anxiously by the knowing weather prophet.

And then, perhaps, as the motorist turns his car northwards, an ominous roar wafts valleywards from the lofty crags; a chill, damp air chases him out of this abode of the storms. He may know now why the rowans and thorns on the bleak fell-sides are bent and twisted with that crippled look of pain, so typical of these storm-dwarfed trees, and why the rocks are so bare and bleached, so wrinkled, heavy, and time-troubled. Then, now speeding faster than the swift-flowing Derwent, the lightsomeness of the open strath of Rosthwaite banishes the impression of Seathwaite's aged desolateness. New scenes delight the returning way. It seems but a moment ere Skiddaw, grey and golden, sends greeting over the silver ripples of the lake and Grange is close at hand.

Round the westerly shore of Derwentwater is now the way, and the sharp turn to the left over the double bridge at Grange calls for attention to

practical matters. On the left, when entering the village, the extensive striated slabs—evidences of the valley's connexion with the long-past glacial period—may be noticed. In no other spot in Lakeland may such splendid specimens be so easily inspected.

In Grange the way swerves sharply to the right, and then, past many a bend, it rises over a heathery knoll to drop again to the meadow-lands of Manesty. The man at the wheel has eyes for little but the road until, after a long climb up the larch-swathed slopes of the Manesty Estates, he sees the grassy shoulder of Catbells ahead. Here the prospect widens. The road stretches straight ahead, like a white ribbon trailed across the mountain-side.

The dash up the gentle slope is almost thrilling. On the left the bulky mass of Catbells springs abruptly skyward; on the right the slope plunges over into the depths. Beyond the grassy verge of the highway, close under wheel, there are uninterrupted views of the shortest way down into the hollow of Brandlehow; the tiny dwellings basking in the sunshine by the lake margin, hundreds of feet below, become tinier during every instant of upward flight. Then crags loom above, an airy swerve out to a rocky headland follows, and those unconcerned in the keeping of the car on the narrow way may revel in the glorious backward revelation of Borrowdale.

Another steeper corner brings the upper levels within reach, and the road crosses above some deep

clefts that show the position of the famous lead veins which the Brandlehow miners worked until recent years. The remains of the larger levels and shafts are several hundreds of feet lower and near the lake-shore.

The woods of Brandlehow Park, the property of the National Trust, now close in and hide the view on the right. But soon the greater distance is revealed and the full breadth of Derwentwater opens out far below, perchance here seen in its least picturesque setting, for the broad stretch of water dwarfs the distant mountains and the islands seem scanty and ill-grouped. Saddleback, rising beyond Keswick with the small steeple of St. John's Church conspicuous, is the most prominent of the mountain outlines, though Skiddaw in the north gradually unfolds its gracefulness.

Yet the road itself is most absorbing. A mere "nick" in the mountain-side, as a Cumbrian would say, its utter and precipitous abruptness on the right-hand side rouses thoughts of one's steering gear and its soundness. As on the Brandlehow section, there is no protecting wall: a fact which nervous passengers are prone to note. Should traffic be encountered, there is comfort for all in taking the inner side. Those making the ordinary round of Derwentwater may be glad to remember this; with a large car the run in the reverse direction may involve unpleasant adventures on this, one of the most interesting, fascinating, and varied of all the Lake-country roads.

Half a mile farther on this latter fact is again

accentuated. A sudden swerve round Catbells' northerly shoulder discloses a new type of beauty. Newlands, indeed, it is, for the wide vale of that name shut in by mountains, some mildly rugged in outline, others only softly beautiful, differs entirely from the narrow, rocky dale recently visited. Causey Pike, with its unmistakable crowning humps, is most prominent of all, and, with the foreground of downward-slanting roadway, the scene forms a perfect picture. To show that variety is charming, the twisting hill of Gutherscales now diverts all attention to the steep, valleyward way. An acute, hair-pin bend, abhorred by the long wheel-base specialists, upsets the balance of the unwary, and after a trying descent a gateway midway on the incline demands a halt. An awkward S turn, with gradients of 1 in 6 and sheep usually basking in the leafy shade, defies any downward hurrying, and beyond an easier stretch there is still one final, brake-testing corner.

Gutherscales is a hill with a history. The deceptive turns and the surprising half-way gate have been the cause of many accidents, fatal and otherwise. The coach-drivers delight to point out a hole in the wall made by a lady cyclist who lost her head and struck the wall with it soon afterwards. The hole in the wall was never repaired, but the head was made as good as new. Truly our Cumberland lasses are hard-headed.

The road beyond the turn on Gutherscales Hill mounts upwards towards Swinside, the mountain in

front with an outline somewhat in conformity with its name, "Swine-side." Behind, Catbells—also suitably named, if one notes the bell-like shape—rises abruptly. Moreover, the mountain was formerly wooded, and within the writer's memory the hunting of the last of the wild cats was a favourite sport. Soon there comes an important branching of the ways. That immediately to the right leads to Keswick through Portinscale, and is the usual route adopted in making the ordinary round of Derwentwater. But there is yet much of interest to visit in the Vale of Derwent ere the return is made to the town.

Bassenthwaite Water remains to be circled. Thus the road to the left is followed, and a hundred yards or so farther brings the village of Swinside suddenly in sight. A steep little hill dips downwards through the hamlet, but the best way to Bassenthwaite avoids this and swings round to the right and northwards.

There is now an open view of the Vale of Newlands on the left, with rough-crested Hindscarth and round-topped Robinson forming its left wall and Causey Pike unmistakable on the right. Some may wish to explore this fertile mountain hollow, probably known to many in connection with Hall Caine's novel, *The Son of Hagar*, and others frequently stray in error up the valley in the hope of making the most direct motor way to Buttermere.

It is usually a hope deferred. Under certain conditions the Newlands side of Buttermere Hause is practically unclimbable by the average car. In

the coaching season the vehicles return this way from Buttermere, and the rough 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$ gradient is so disintegrated by this traffic and the action of the wheel-skids that a layer of loose stones from six inches to a foot in depth may lie on parts of the incline. One or other, or even both, of the driving wheels usually fail to find hold on the slippery, moving mass.

The same conditions prevail on the Buttermere side of Honister Pass, but this notorious spot is too well known to entrap many travellers. Both hills must commend themselves to the tyre-makers. Moreover, the whole of the Newlands road will keep the man at the wheel from somnolence: steep hills, surprising gates, and deceptive corners conduce to wakefulness. Like many things with a bad name, the Devil's Elbow is the most interesting. The hill is reached just before the mountain road is gained that leads to the *mauvais pas* on Buttermere Hause, and its features are two awkward turns and gradients of 1 in 5. Those who explore Newlands Vale, or return after a visit to the hill at its head, need not come down the whole length of the valley to Swinside on their way to Braithwaite, Bassenthwaite, or Buttermere by the Whinlatter Pass. Instead of descending the gate-barred hill to Stair, they may follow an excellent mountain road along the front of Barrow Mountain.

Reverting to the Borrowdale-Bassenthwaite route, after leaving Swinside there is a straight-ahead run through Little Braithwaite, with its steep hill, to the larger village of Braithwaite, where the

Whinlatter Pass over into the Vale of Lorton and Buttermere branches to the left.

A more or less direct route through Braithwaite now brings the main highway between Keswick and Cockermouth within reach. The road onwards is unmistakable. Beyond Thornthwaite mines the Lake of Bassenthwaite gleams on the right, with Skiddaw, less shapely than massive, heaving its bulky shoulders above the blue waters. The confronting roadway vista shows Barf grandly, with its bold outline and slaty escarpments of russet and purple. Geologists know it as the home of the fossil graptolites, and also of the white-robed Bishop, whose rocky figure watches over their quest on the sliding screes underneath. Another painted rock at the foot of the mountain and opposite the Swan Hotel represents the choir-boy. The painting of these rocks is a very old custom: the why and wherefore of the work is unknown locally.

The road now soon approaches the lake-shore, but is always separated from it by the railway line, whose ugliness is not unusual. Still there are innumerable delightful peeps of lake and mountain from the foliage-shaded highway, and a wealth of flowers brighten the woodland depths. At Peel Wyke, which, locally, is a famous hostelry, some may care to linger and visit the ancient British fort on the hill-top on the right. Others will be interested to know that up in Wythop Woods, on the opposite side of the valley, is one of the largest heronries in the north of England.

Shortly after leaving Peel Wyke the road

crosses the railway. Then it winds to the right and follows around the northerly end of the lake.

On this section the Ouse Bridge is an outstanding feature in more ways than one, for its deceptively sharp approaching turn has brought many a car to a halt against the projecting abutment. The River Derwent flows twenty feet below, no longer the streamlet that kept one company amidst the mountains at Seathwaite, but now a wide river with Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite Water seaward-borne in its keeping.

The roadway now broadens, and soon the lake is left behind, hidden by the shrubberies of the Armathwaite Estate which lie on either side. At Castle Inn a curve to the right brings Skiddaw into the confronting prospect, and the 8-mile return to Keswick is begun. An excellent surface and directness favour speedy travel, for one is now on the main trunk road that leads to the heart of Lakeland and its metropolis.

Perchance it is the tamest part of the half-day's wandering, but those who wish to quit the highway and see the famous view so favoured by Southey and Wordsworth may add a pleasing finish to their travel. Where the hill leads down to Dancing Gate Farm, three miles from Keswick, a mountain road of good surface turns upward across the foot of Skiddaw. This leads past the picturesque farms and cottages of Millbeck, and thence up to the "terrace walk" where all the Vale of Derwent lies below—a fertile oasis "enclosed by the most majestic mountains that ever earthquakes made in sport."

Then Applethwaite, embowered amongst its orchards, is passed, where Wordsworth's cottage hides on the left 'midst the lofty trees that echo with the music of the rushing rivulet far down in the sheltered glen. Soon stately mansions, railways, and other aggressive signs of civilization obtrude, and Keswick is entered by the bridge over the Greta.

CHAPTER IX

EASTERN LAKELAND—
HAWESWATER AND ULLSWATER

“Away, away from men and towns,
To the wild woods and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another’s mind.”

SHELLEY

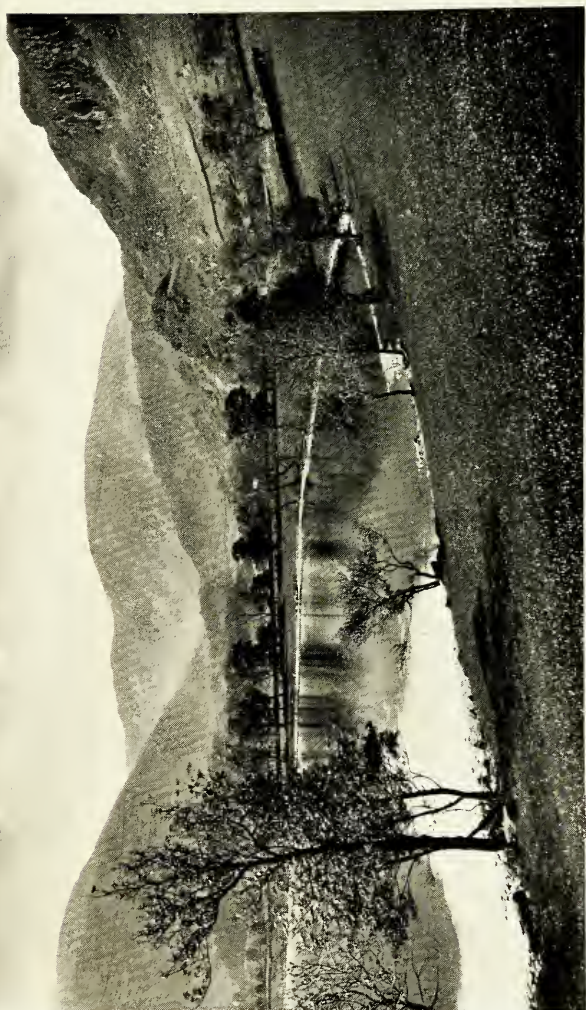
THERE is some truth in the popular idea that the good things of the world are reserved for royalty. In Lakeland this is true enough. Haweswater, situated, as it were, in the back-garden of Lowther Castle, sees more of crowned heads and their connections than all the rest of the Lakes combined. Though one of the gems of the district, this easterly lake is practically unknown to the average tourist. The bulky mass of High Street seems to possess more terrors for modern pedestrians than it had for the Romans of long ago. Moreover, for carriage folk the 15-mile journey between the posting hotels at Penrith and the Dun Bull at the head of Haweswater has tended to the desertion of the secluded but beautiful valley. But the motor-car will alter this. There is no portion of the district where the new locomotion scores more strikingly, and even the

closing of the best and nearest route through Lowther Park cannot stay the power of petrol.

Keswick may be considered the best starting-place. As a circular run there is nothing finer in the country than to go through Penrith and on to Haweswater, thence returning around the shoulder of High Street to Ullswater, along the shores of this lake to Patterdale, over Kirkstone Pass to Low Wood on Windermere, and back by the main trunk road to Keswick.

At the outset there are plenty of attractions for the motorist as he leaves the Lake-country metropolis by the Penrith road, passing ere long signposts on the right that suggest divergences to the Vale of St. John or the Druid's Circle. But those who realize the manifold charms of the more distant regions to be visited may well say with Kipling, "If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never 'eed naught else." The hilly nature of the splendidly surfaced highway soon makes its presence felt; in fact, during the 18-mile ride to Penrith it is doubtful whether there is any single stretch of level running extending continuously for a hundred yards. Thus it is a busy road for the driver. The first awkward spot is at Naddle Bridge, about two and a half miles from the town, and should the motorist fail at the deceptively sharp turn and finish in the stone wall, he will not strike virgin ground or wall. Others have been there before him.

From the crest of Burn's Brow the first full view of the easterly plain is unfolded, with the



THE HEAD OF HAWESWATER AND HARTER FELL FROM THE ROAD

Pennines on the distant horizon. Helvellyn on the right, with the quarry-torn face of Wanthwaite Crag in front, is more bulky than beautiful, and even the long Vale of St. John, with its Castle Rock, scarcely lives up to its reputation as sung by the poets. It requires a very lively imagination and dense twilight to transform the distant knoll into the fairy castle with its turrets and towers.

"Stern Blencathra's skyey height" is altogether a finer object on the left, with the deep ravine of the Glenderaterra separating it from the Lonscale Crag end of Skiddaw. The peculiarly conical, purple peak at the head of the vale, always so glorious in the late summer when afire with the warm glory of the heather, is Great Calva. Beyond this lies Caldbeck and John Peel's country, but the road seen winding across the shoulder of Saddleback is not the motorist's way thither. The large scattered building on the breast of Saddleback is the Cumberland Sanatorium.

Then the sudden, downward dip of Burn's Brow will rivet the attention of the man at the wheel. Amongst earlier motorists this hill was notorious; even to-day the Keswick repair folk look on it as a good friend. The upper stretch of about thirty yards has a gradient of 1 in $7\frac{1}{2}$, but during the descent the lower hidden corner has the greater interest. Soon Threlkeld is passed, with its blind turn, and old church tower modernized into a semblance of similar sand structures seen beside the seaside. Then below on the right there are

passing glimpses of Threlkeld Hall, an old farmhouse with romantic associations.

It was here that the young Clifford, son of the worthless noble who killed the youthful Earl of Rutland, spent his early years in humble but safe seclusion, hidden away from the swords of York. For over twenty years, without learning even so much as to read or write, he lived a simple and contented life as a shepherd under the care of Sir Lancelot Threlkeld. This worthy protector had married the boy's mother, yet his behaviour was scarcely that of a stepfather of that period. When Henry VII came to the throne, the young earl was restored to his estates, and conducted himself so famously as to exchange the title of the Shepherd Lord for that of the Good Lord Clifford.

Beyond Threlkeld village the lead mines form an obtrusive foreground below Saddleback's rugged escarpments, which now rise grandly above the roadway. The jagged outline changes every minute, and there are ever-varying vistas into the torrent-carved frontage of this grim old mountain. Just before passing under the bridge from the workings there is a passing sight of the actual summit, which is the culminating cone of the ridge that rises to the right of the mines. The steepest grade of Doddick Brow, which soon rises in front, has the merit of straight approach, yet with its 1 in $6\frac{1}{2}$ stretch it is the stiffest climb between Keswick and Penrith.

Then on past Scales the road sinks valleywards,

and soon again rises steadily for two miles to Troutbeck. There the usual and quickest way from Keswick to Ullswater branches off to the right. It mounts below the curious rounded slopes of Mell Fell to a height of 1125 feet, and thence for the most part descends to Ullswater, passing through Dockray and Matterdale End *en route*. The main Penrith highway reaches its highest point—949 feet—a few hundred yards beyond the turn to Troutbeck Station. Then a half-mile “straight,” where on a cloudless summer’s day the keen air of the open moor meets one pleasantly, suggests the thought that the mountains of Lakeland no longer constrict the road-maker’s efforts. The last eight miles to Penrith, through straggling Motherby, and Greystoke with its unexpected right-hand turn, can be covered more speedily, inasmuch as the predominating downgrade promotes such progress.

The sight of the fir-clad, pine-topped Beacon Hill rising above the valley betokens the nearer approach to Penrith. This was probably the Red Hill or Pen Rhudd from which the town gets its name. The red sandstone houses that line the streets seem strange after the grey, stone-built dwellings of Lakeland. Once in the town the road swerves around to the left and right over the railway, and just beyond the bridge it is preferable to turn immediately to the left down an easy gradient which leads into Middlegate.

This is part of the great highway between England and Scotland, and the short but narrow

length of roadway bordered by the close-set buildings is one that often leads the swift traffic of these days into trouble. In summer-time there is an almost constant stream of north- and south-bound cars through the "middle gate," where two vehicles of average breadth may scarcely pass. The way for Haweswater follows the south road through Penrith, making use of the right-hand branch beyond the Crown Hotel.

For those with any love or understanding of antiquity Penrith is a fascinating old town, and some motorists may care to linger awhile thereabouts. The famous giant's grave is in St. Andrew's churchyard, and close at hand after emerging from Middlegate. There are two stone pillars nearly twelve feet high set up long ago in memory of Owen Cæsarius, a great warrior of Athelstan's time and a magnificent man about fifteen feet in height, as is suggested by the distance between the two stones. He roamed the Inglewood Forest and killed wild boars like sucking pigs, and in memory of these wonderful feats of strength, so the old writers say, four boars were formerly to be seen sculptured between the pillars. Close by is another large stone, originally a rose cross roughly carved, now called the Giant's Thumb for want of a better name.

On the hill near the railway station stand the remains of the old castle which recalls the stormy days when the Scots and English carried on their feuds in the vicinity of the Border. It is supposed to have been built in 1389 by one of the Nevilles.

Now, after centuries of storm and strife, the ancient ruins and their surroundings are at last in the safe keeping of the local authorities as the property of the town itself.

For motorists with an hour or two to spare in Penrith, probably the prettiest outing is to the beautiful Nunnery Walks in the glen of the Croglin, visiting on the way other interesting features on the north-easterly side of the town. The whole round, making first for Long Meg and her Daughters by Langwathby and Little Salkeld, would amount to a distance of less than thirty miles. The branch road to Edenhall, which is three and a half miles from Penrith, should not be missed on the outward journey. There the "Luck" is still kept as religiously as if the fairies really left it with the ancient butler, singing as they went—

"If this glass should break or fall
Farewell the luck of Edenhall."

Strangely enough the glass once rolled over on to the ground, but without any resulting damage. The succeeding misfortunes to the Musgrave family were ascribed to this.

In a field on the hill above Little Salkeld, and on the left of the road, will be found Long Meg and her sixty-six Daughters, making a circle about 350 yards in circumference. This is supposed to have been a judicial court of the Druids; also where they offered supplications to the all-healing Power and, as propitiation, burned their criminals in wicker baskets. Then to reach the Nunnery from

Long Meg it is best not to return to Little Salkeld. Rather should the motorist continue on the road to Glassonby and through Kirkoswald, with the church in the hollow and its tower away up on the hill.

There is a steep climb up out of Kirkoswald, but the Nunnery is scarcely two miles away, the entrance thereto being through a broad gate situated on the left, quite midway up another hill. The old building stands by the site of a Benedictine convent, but the lavish beauties of the gorge where the Croglin plunges down through the wood-hung cliffs are the main attraction. The length of the glen should be traversed to where the hurrying Croglin finds peace in the still waters of the Eden. After regaining the car the return 10-mile journey to Penrith might be made by Kirkoswald, Lazonby, and Great Salkeld.

On the backward way the sight of the blue heights down in the distant west may revive thoughts of the mountains and the lakes enfolded therein. Unknown Haweswater naturally comes to mind, and for the interesting run thereto the main road to Shap may be joined by using the cross-road from Carlton: this obviates the re-entering of Penrith. The highway is joined just beyond the field wherein stands the plague or barter stone, where in the times of the pestilence business was transacted between the town and country. Strangely enough, two similar stones are to be found in the remote Thirlmere Valley, though one is scarcely visible unless the lake's surface be low. At the present time in some of the Highland glens

these barter-stones are in practical use ; for instance, the travelling baker goes his rounds and, finding so many pence on the stone, he leaves bread accordingly. One doubts whether this plan would prove successful in Penrith to-day.

Soon a sudden descent into the "cutting" called Kemplow ends at Eamont Bridge, which provides a remarkably picturesque scene, with its recessed buttresses and adjacent residential relics of antiquity. From the crest of the bridge, which connects Cumberland and Westmorland, there is a pleasing backward view, including the old Welcome into Cumberland Inn, close below. Many will regret to hear that the historic old hostelry is shortly to lose its licence.

It may be interesting to mention here, for the benefit of those who avoid towns whenever possible, that an alternative road from Keswick comes in by the side of the Welcome into Cumberland Inn. To arrive by this route the road through Penruddock Village, rather than that through Motherby and Greystoke, should have been followed. The latter is the longer, but the less hilly and better-surfaced way ; this is the one usually followed locally. However, it may be noted that the Penruddock approach to Penrith or Eamont Bridge passes through Stainton, and about a mile short of Penrith a branch road on the right leads direct to Eamont Bridge. This divergence is made just after passing under the railway bridge, and though it loses in the matter of picturesqueness it saves time and distance.

During the crossing of Eamont Bridge there is a glimpse on the left of Brougham Hall, prettily placed on a wooded height ; but the Castle of that name is not visible, being situated a short distance away to the east, and to the right of the Appleby road after crossing the Eamont River. Near the south end of Eamont Village there is a quaint corner abounding in interest, both ancient and modern. Few will pass by without a halt. On the left-hand side of the road is the Bee Hive Inn, with its amusing and inviting sign, evidently effective, judged by the wandering and waiting traffic:—

“In this hive we're all alive
Good liquor makes us funny
If you be dry step in and try
The virtue of our honey. 1727.”

Almost opposite is the Crown Inn, around which the road for Ullswater and Haweswater bends sharply. From this spot, looking along the main highway, the entrance gates to Lowther Castle and its park are seen. Motorists may no longer pass through here, or by the park route to Haweswater from Clifton, without special permission obtained in writing. Thus the way to Ullswater should be followed as far as Yanwath, after noting on leaving Eamont the two peculiar features which have puzzled all archæologists, past and present. The circular mound, altogether covered with grass and known as King Arthur's Round Table, lies in a field just opposite the Crown Inn. The road actually cuts off part of the circle.

Its fellow-relic, Mayburgh, is a tree-covered crater soon noticed on the opposite side of the road.

At Yanwath there is another bibulous rhyming sign. Then, just after the climb over the railway bridge, where Saddleback and the Ullswater mountains loom grandly above the horizon, the way to Haweswater branches off to the left and mounts gently across the pasture-lands to Askham. During the approach Lowther Castle may be noticed on the opposite side of the valley. The road swerves across the upper part of the village, and thus misses much of its prettiness. Askham is an old-fashioned spot, where the village street and stream keep each other company amongst the ancient houses, which peep shadily from sheltering sycamore and stately elm.

A mile beyond Helton the open moorland wilds of High Street rise on the right, and the road dips suddenly into the valley of the Lowther, where the dark, peaty waters of Heltondale Beck leap boisterously alongside in the ashen shade. Bampton itself is not entered, but in an outlying portion of it the road takes a right-hand turn which leads to the bridge over the Hows Beck.

There is a delightful scene here which is almost theatrical in its effect. The waterfall comes splashing over the rocky scarp, a study in white foam and brown boulders, fringed with the most golden of mosses. On the one hand stands the old, grey saw-mill, with its whirling water-wheel almost hidden in silvery, sun-flecked spray, and on

the other a white, Westmorland homestead betokens comfort when the day's toil is over.

Then, ere long, the pretty roadside villages are left behind, and upward lies the way into the mountain gateway. First there comes a silver gleam amongst the rushy levels down on the left, and suddenly the heathery slopes sink away in front to show "the Water of the Heights." The first sight of Haweswater, flanked by the wooded crags and the monster mass over which the Romans made their High Street from Penrith to Windermere, is a typical Lakeland surprise. It is one, and there are many others of a similar nature, which the motorist specially realizes by reason of his swifter travel. To some these speedy revelations may provide but fleeting pleasures. Yet the motor-car has begotten new visions of those wondrous contrasts and varying beauties which make the Lakeland dales a joy for ever to those of the open mind, and the open eye.

At first Haweswater is simply wild; there are no signs of human presence until the ivy-clad Lowther boat-house breaks the shore-line. The road, with few farm-steads bordering it, now follows the water's edge for over two miles, and there is ample time to note the surrounding details. Naddle Forest lines the easterly side of the lake, with Walla Crag in front to remind one unfailingly of its namesake above the east side of Derwentwater. Both are richly foliage-draped, and similar craggy slabs break through the green mantle where larch predominates. Harter Fell, grey and gully-seamed,

makes a shapely central sentinel to guard the valley's head at Mardale. The westerly side possesses less character of outline except where, in the south, High Street merges in Kidsty Pike and the Rough Crag ridge of Riggindale.

The lake itself is almost divided into two portions by the Measand promontory. Doubtless in due time the separation will be complete, for the Measand Beck is always busy disturbing and distributing the foundations of High Street. In flood-time the thundering torrent moves great boulders 'midst its tumult of waters, and at all seasons this Measand Beck is a magnificent fall—a fact which is evident even from the roadway. The Measand alluvion has led to the two portions of the lake being called High Water and Low Water, though of course both are at the same level. Haweswater is the loftiest of the lakes—694 feet above the sea; in its length of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles there is not a single island.

The road ends at Mardale Green by the Dun Bull Inn, which is the last house at the upper end of the valley. This remote hollow, with its level, carpet-like floor of brightest green, is quite enclosed by the most rugged of mountains, for the projecting ridge of Riggindale cuts off even the backward view of the lake. The savage recesses of High Street, where the most beautiful of mountain tarns lie hidden, invite exploration, but only for those who understand the charms of Nature in her sterner moods. It was here that the pensive stranger strayed upwards whilst his evening meal was in course of preparation at the comfortable little

inn. The return was made sooner than the good folk expected, and when asked where he had been he answered innocently, "As far as it is finished." The stranger had no understanding of real mountain beauty, and to him it was simple chaos.

The small yew-encircled Church of Mardale is well worth a visit, if only as a reminder of the King of Mardale and his kin, who ruled here from the year 1209 until 1885. A direct heir to the large estate was never lacking until the latter year, when Hugh Holme, the last male survivor of the family, died. The first Hugh Holme had incurred King John's displeasure by taking sides with the monks of Canterbury. He fled northwards for his life, and happened to find safe retreat amongst the Mardale mountains, then a well-nigh inaccessible district. A deep recess in the foot of Riggindale Crag was his first home; it is called Hugh's Cave to this day.

There are other curious features connected with this out-of-the-world spot. Funerals are rare events in this dale of "long livers," but now and again there is a "stir" in the little churchyard. An ancient Holme law makes each dalesman take his turn in the digging of a grave. Then on High Street there is the great autumn meeting of the shepherds, who sort out and restore to their various owners any of the mountain-going sheep that have strayed. On these extensive upland heights there are no boundaries to separate the various properties, and though by instinct each flock usually keeps to its own "heaf," there are many adjustments to be

made. In the evening comes the famous dinner at the "Dun Bull"; it is a great time of riotous jollification. Many a lost sheep is found, but many a sheep and shepherd as well are lost on the homeward journey.

There is only one road in and out of Mardale. Thus the motorist will return by the west shore of Haweswater, perchance noticing the curious standing stones — more Giants' Thumbs — that appear near the skyline on the left when approaching the foot of the lake. Just beyond Askham the important by-road to Ullswater branches off to the left. This, though scarcely of first-class surface, leads one pleasantly upwards and across the grassy lower slopes of High Street.

Shortly after the road begins the 2-mile, downward dip into the Eamont Valley, the village of Celleron may be noticed on the right. The Roman road cuts across towards Penrith about a hundred yards short of the village. The backward view shows Crossfell dominating the Pennine backbone finely. It is there during an easterly gale that the Helm Wind roars prodigiously, making wild music which in awfulness and grandeur resembles the crashing of ocean breakers on a rocky coast. Doubtless this accounts for the earlier name of the mountain, the Fiends' Fell, and the local belief that the unloosed demons used to hold open-air meetings on the height. The pious St. Augustine came and built a cross and altar on the top, administering the Holy Eucharist, and baptizing the mountain afresh with the name of Crossfell. The

crowning heap of stones is still known locally as the Altar on Crossfell.

Ere long the gleaming stretches of Ullswater lie below, its shore-lines wood-fringed and flaunting that wondrous curve of beauty that pleases the artistic eye and adds force to the long outline of distant mountains, where Helvellyn lords it over Patterdale. It is an ideal approach to Ullswater. Soon the mossy walls and hawthorn hedges, where the small birds find sanctuary from the hovering hawks of High Street, cease to flash close to the car's shining panels; the broad highway, dusty but delightful in its smoothness, is entered. This is the main Penrith road which has come through Tirril, with its Quaker burying-ground where the remains of young Gough, the victim of Helvellyn and the poet's imagination, were laid to rest.

The straight way to Pooley Bridge is unmistakable, though an excellent branch on the left may be noticed. This leads for some distance along the east shore of Ullswater direct to Howtown, and thence over the wonderful Hause Hill to Martindale and Boardale. Motorists might well note that there is no further outlet from these peak-encircled hollows, where the wild red deer yet outnumber the human inhabitants.

To the passing motorist Pooley Bridge seems all too modern, yet it has many old-time interests. It used to be a noted cock-fighting centre, and one of the customs here, as elsewhere in the district, was for the schoolmaster to give his scholars a prize for which the fight took place. The scholars

also subscribed their cock-pennies, and the main was fought at Easter-time. In some schools the master's salary partly depended on this custom, for often the prizes won did not come up to the value of all the cock-pennies subscribed. Few of the Lakeland villages were without their cockpits. They can easily be found on inquiry. If the motorist "ga canny" in some of the north-west villages, he may perchance even to-day see a main fought out. It will be a never-to-be-forgotten experience.

Pooley Bridge is in Barton parish, and the church, which dates back to the thirteenth century, is remarkable for its tower, which is placed in the centre of the building. An old epitaph in the churchyard is so little known that it is well worth quoting :—

"Under this stone, reader, interr'd doth lye
Beauty and virtue's true epitomy ;
At her appearance the noon sun
Blush'd and shrunk in cause quite undone.
In her concentre'd did all graces dwell ;
God plucked my rose that he might take a smell."

The road to Patterdale crosses the river Eamont at Pooley Bridge, and after passing the steamer pier emerges from the oak and hazel-decked slopes to the open shore-line of Ullswater. On the right a branching way would lead to Dalemmain or Dacre, but just now the scene ahead rivets attention. Clusters of sweet-scented syringa bloom lighten the olive shade of the alders that line the pebbly shore, where marigolds and globe flowers gleam in golden splendour. Dunmallet, a tumulus of

trees and once a Roman fort, overshadows the roadway on the right; on the left the breadth of water stretches across to the wide front of the range of High Street. Its many projecting peaks here show a bold frontage.

Then beyond the level stretch, where the road and water-line keep close company, the distant heights are revealed intermittently, and Hallin Fell, crowned by the monument to Lord Brougham, stands forth finely from the bay at Howtown. By Brackenrigg the road swerves off from the lake. At the foot of the long downward incline below the Brackenrigg Hotel the branch way on the right would lead up to the well-known Watermillock Hause,¹ a famous test-climb amongst motor-cycling enthusiasts. It rises up to the Hause to the left of Little Mell Fell, whose levelled top when seen from below Brackenrigg evidences the existence of another ancient fort.

The Church of Watermillock stands upon a hillock, but, unless one takes to the by-road up towards Little Mell Fell Hause, it will scarcely be noticed. In ancient times there was a different tale to tell. The original church, a twelfth-century structure, stood close by the lake and usually attracted the attention of the savage Scotch raiders. It was often destroyed, and at last, in 1558, the New Kirk was built about a mile from the lake and close to Priest Crag.

This latter place used to be a common resort of the country-folk on Sundays, and their hunting,

¹ The lower part is called Underwood Hill.

cock-fighting, nutting, and other diversions were accompanied by so much riot of shouting and swearing that church-worship was disturbed. At last this raised the pious wrath of the minister, who reproved them accordingly : " O ye wicked of Watermillock, and ye perverse of New Kirk, ye go a-hunting, a-nutting, and a-rowing on the Sabbath-day, but, on my soul, if you go any more I'll go with you." The Bishop and the manorial duke heard of this, the trees were cleared from the Priest Crag, and the expression, " O ye wicked of Watermillock," became a local saying which is still used by the fell-folk.

In early summer even the speediest motorist must catch the flash of colour as he flies through Watermillock. Its gaudily tinted and flower-fronted cottages provide a wealth of prismatic splendour that makes the village unmistakable.

Then the pleasant way winds on through the woods where the ragged thorns are smothered in honeysuckle, the rose-trees crimsoned with bloom, and the air is scent-full with meadow-sweet, until the blue water shines clear through the trees and its silvery ripples line the roadside once more. For miles these lake-shore peeps cheer the traveller. Ullswater winds on into the heart of the great mountains, and the road goes alongside unerringly 'neath grim impending crags, wedded, as it were, to the protection of the great waters and their fringing shield of foliage.

This second close meeting with the shore-line marks the end of the lower reach of the lake, and

a backward glimpse shows Skelly Neb, where the skellies or fresh-water herring were caught, jutting boldly forwards towards Kail-pot Crag on the farther shore. Then Gowbarrow Fell springs grandly upwards on the right, its lower slopes clothed breast-high in bracken, where the wild deer roam fearlessly, as though knowing how hardly may humans distinguish them from the big brown rocks. Now the road rises well above the water's level ; the crest of a little hill affords a view-point that calls appealingly for a halt.

Here there is none of the comparative tameness of the Pooley Bridge end of the vale. The two upper reaches now take form. The shimmering waters enclosed in the most graceful of shore-lines are encompassed by the mighty hills, stern, sublime, and silent. Everywhere is beauty. All the lines, whether of lake or wood, mountain or cloud, fulfil each other in marvellous manner—marvellous because, with their constant repetition, there is never monotony, nor does harmony tend to sameness. There is a greater sense of stillness and peace by Ullswater than by any other of the larger lakes ; the hills press round with a closer grasp, and the dales are more lonely. All nature is unspoilt. Surely 'twere a full compliment to compare Lucerne with our Ullswater.

The graceful little steamers which ply the lake add to the grandeur of the scene ; they help to a comparison of proportions. Birk Fell, with Place Fell o'ertopping it, seems huge and sheer, rising out of the waters on the farther shore. Then



A RIFT IN THE CLOUDS, ULLSWATER

A SCENE FROM THE ROADWAY BELOW GOVBARROW PARK

following around in the course of the sun St. Sunday's Crag, round and bulky, almost dwarfs the loftier, distant Kirkstone heights and Fairfield. Dollywaggon Pike pushes up its pert peak at the south end of Helvellyn's massiveness, and Catchedcam, its northerly compeer, is scarcely visible above the wooded heights of Stybarrow, now straight ahead.

The road, always altogether splendid of surface and breadth for such surroundings, calls one onwards. Lyulph's Tower, modern but not ugly in its ivied dress, stands on the fell-side close at hand on the right ; it betokens the approach of the entrance to Gowbarrow Park and Aira Force, where Wordsworth saw the "host of golden daffodils." The famous waterfall is scarcely ten minutes' walk away, up in the depths of the Aira Glen. The estate now belongs to the nation, yet it is remarkable how few passers-by stop to take a practical interest in their own property.

The somewhat steeply rising branch road on the right leads to Keswick, 14 miles away, by Dockray and Troutbeck. Patterdale lies straight ahead, and soon the way sweeps around the pretty bay below Glencoin, the first of the long mountain valleys that branch up into the recesses of Helvellyn. Then comes the steep rise into the shade of the Stybarrow woods, where arcades of bending beeches and stately firs line the ensuing descent to a clear view down and across the lake to Silver Point with House Holm, the lake's largest island, breaking up the blue expanse. The road, a mere groove in the

great cliff that drops down into the deep waters, curls round the rugged front of Stybarrow Crag.

Beyond this, drooping larches and dense woodlands enclose the hill-top. They screen the prospect for a while until the meadowland levels of Glenridding open out views of the pretty mountain valley, in whose upper reaches are the Greenside mines, one of the very few successful mining ventures in Lakeland. Glenridding Village, where shops spread their tempting wares by the roadside, is soon passed. There is a last close peep of Ullswater ere the way bends around and over the Grisedale Beck, which rushes lakewards, hurrying, as it were, out from the savage grip of the wildest of the branching mountain dales. There are passing glimpses of the pointed front of Striding Edge, and St. Sunday's Crag dominates the other side of Grisedale grandly.

Patterdale Village demands the motorist's attention by reason of its narrow corners, and then after crossing many an ash-crowned knoll, where the prospect varies delightfully, the road leaves Patterdale behind and crosses the end of Deepdale. Guarding the head of this valley stands Fairfield, showing its grandest rocky front, very different from its Grasmere aspect. There certainly it is Faar-Feld—the sheep's mountain, but here the raven, the hawk, and the hardiest of hill-foxes alone find home. But mountain grandeur must not monopolize attention. With unexpected suddenness the road bends to the left and mounts, almost with a jump, over the Goldrill Beck Bridge.

Speed is now desirable in order to get into one's stride for the oncoming climb up the Pass of Kirkstone. Brotherswater, square and almost unpicturesque itself, achieves a certain impressiveness from the ruggedness of the encircling dale of High Hartsop, with the overlooking bastions of Dove Crag and Hart Crag looming darkly on the right. Brotherswater Inn looks lonesome and almost unattractive in its wild setting, but the homely place has proved a veritable friend in need to many a stricken traveller. There are memories of disastrous days and nights when grim gravitation has hurled and shattered frail and unwary mortals on the rocky steep. Many a life has been saved by the near hospitality of the kindly inn-folk.

The real ascent of the pass begins fully a quarter of a mile beyond the Brotherswater Inn, and rises 750 feet in less than a mile and three-quarters. The road, like a grey ribbon, is soon seen twisting up into the gap between the Red Screes on the right and Caudale Moor on the left. The steepness is not at first evident; in fact, when actually agrip with the long stretch of 1 in $6\frac{1}{2}$ to $8\frac{1}{2}$, the incline has a mild aspect that tempts one to tamper with the higher speeds. But few mount by the Kirkstone without stirring the mountain echoes with the hum of the lowest gear. The sight, on the skyline to the right, of a curiously shaped rock, which "gives to the savage pass its name," is a sign that the final, upper step is close at hand. This 50-yard stretch is the steepest of all, but at no place does the gradient exceed 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$.

It is the length rather than the steepness of the Ullswater side of Kirkstone Pass which causes trouble. Moreover, the worst part comes last. This proves an important factor under bad weather conditions, specially in snow-time, when even a "cool hand" may become as hot as his engine. However, those who halt here will have ample time to enjoy the impressive scene valleywards, where Brotherswater lies snugly ensconced in the dale, with Place Fell towering massively in the distance.

Beyond the gloomy array of danger-signals which decorate the top of the pass, 1500 feet above sea-level, the road drops gently to the Traveller's Rest, one of many in the district. It is "the highest inhabited house in England," but these are also numerous.

Here comes the first peep of Windermere far below, with the smaller light of Blelham Farm shining brightly out of the farther pasture-lands. In the distance Coniston Old Man lifts his shapely head above the foothills. The road on the right, which dips suddenly over into the valley depths and then shows serpentine 500 feet below, is the quickest way to Ambleside. There are nearly three miles of almost continuously steep descent. Few would select such a brake-destroying route. Thus the usual road on the left will be chosen, which leads downwards by Troutbeck Valley. The quickest and by far the most beautiful way to Ambleside in this latter direction leaves the main Troutbeck highway three miles from the Traveller's

Rest. After some sharp descents a confronting signpost marks the beginning of the short climb up to Town Head, the most northerly portion of Troutbeck Village, which extends stragglingly for nearly a mile, high up across the side of the long valley. At the turning-point Low Wood is given as $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and Ambleside $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

The road soon begins to descend gently, after passing the Mortal Man Inn on the left. Quaint old farm-houses and cottages, almost prehistoric, judged by the way they cling to each other for self-preservation, make the way always interesting. Then at Town End the turn for Low Wood appears on the right. A few minutes later the wide expanse of Windermere meets the gaze, its islands and its girdle of wooded hills indescribably beautiful after the mountain wilds so recently forsaken. It is the last scenic surprise of the day, for, after some engrossing corners and steep gradients have been negotiated, the main highway is entered close to Low Wood. Now the heated brakes find rest during the speedy flight to Ambleside, and then northwards by the familiar main trunk road.

CHAPTER X

AROUND THE WESTERN LAKES— THE VALE OF BUTTERMERE, ENNERDALE AND WASTWATER

"O'er a hundred valleys deep,
Where the hills' green shadows sleep,
Scarce known because the valley-trees
Cross those upland images,
O'er a hundred hills each other
Watching to the western wave."

MRS. E. B. BROWNING

TO the average motor tourist in the Lake country these western lakes are a region separate; coaching-folk and pedestrians find them their happiest hunting-ground. Motorists in the Windermere district would seem to be cut off effectively by the circuitous coast-line of Black Combe, whilst those making Keswick their centre are prone to connect the impossible Honister Pass or Buttermere Hause with a westerly outing.

Yet from the latter centre, without touching either of these passes, all the three westerly valleys may easily be visited and the return therefrom made in a single full-day's run. Moreover, the roads no longer offer serious cause for complaint. For a half-day's run the Buttermere Valley alone is delightful; it may be seen much more advantage-



EARLY MORNING REFLECTIONS ON CRUMMOCK WATER
BUTTERMERE, WITH HONISTER CRAG BOLD AND BULKY, APPEARS IN THE DISTANCE



ously from a motor of moderate horse-power than from a four-in-hand, though of course the thrilling descent of Honister is missed—which again some may count to the advantage of the motor.

Those who favour quantity rather than quality in a motor outing would doubtless prefer to reach Buttermere from the Cockermouth end of the Vale of Lorton. Thus they may at the outset take the 13-mile run to the town on the Cocker where Wordsworth was born, and in whose beautiful old Castle Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned long ago. The westerly shore of Bassenthwaite Water is skirted on the way, and if at the approach to the town the right-hand turn is taken, the Castle will be noticed amongst the trees on the right. If it is not intended to go farther than the round of Buttermere, the glimpse from the look-out tower should not be missed. Far under the weathered sandstone walls the river Derwent, fresh from the blue mountains on the horizon, winds amidst rich pastoral loveliness to the meeting of the waters. Then in the other extreme are the underground dungeons, and the crypt-like chapel with its wonderful groined ceiling.

But through Cockermouth is not the quickest way to Lorton and Buttermere. The town may be missed and a considerable distance saved if the main highway is forsaken by turning to the left at Embleton, where, after crossing the railway line, a good road leads towards the mountains. The right-hand turn should be taken after climbing the first hill beyond Embleton, and thence, after avoid-

ing a turn at the second corner on the right, which would lead to Cockermouth, the way lies straight on until the main Lorton-Buttermere road is reached. The route onwards is now unmistakable, if care be taken to note that the main road keeps to the right at two junctions. It goes through the village of Low Lorton and then directly ahead.

However, if one intend to include distant Westwater in the day's wanderings, neither of these routes should be chosen, rather let the crossing of Whinlatter Pass be made. From Keswick, Braithwaite should first be reached. The turning-point from the Cockermouth road is noticed just beyond the second outward milestone. Once through the village with its twisting lanes, the mountains rise ahead aggressively and the road starts boldly upwards. The Whinlatter Hill is altogether delightful; the gradients, and usually the surfaces also, are excellent, whilst the views during the climb are ever varying, wide and wonderful. The hill rises 720 feet in practically two miles, and possesses two interesting corners. On the lower of these, rather more than half-way up the full ascent, the gradient is 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$, and in the initial climb after leaving Braithwaite there is a 300-yard stretch with an average of 1 in 8. The steepest bit here is 1 in 6.

Then comes an almost level run before the final short hill is tackled, and before reaching this the backward view should not be missed. The green valley of the Derwent lies below; its lake is hidden, but Bassenthwaite appears through the underlying

larch crests, with Skiddaw far above, huge and beautiful in its summer coat of many colours. Farther eastwards, and in the direction whence the road has come, the distant range of Helvellyn rises bulkily, and should the day be clear, the Pennines, with Crossfell dominant, may be seen across the plains of mid-Cumberland.

Now, with Grisedale Pike on the one hand and Lorton Fells on the other, the speed-gods call one downward through the mountain pass to the pleasant pasture-levels of Lorton. The fell-road valleyward, which branches off to the left, should be avoided. The approach to the one big and somewhat tortuous hill on this western side of the pass is heralded by the sight of a farm-house on the left. On the upper turn, which is immediately reached, the gradient is 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. The lower section has an average of 1 in 8 until the bridge-crowned corner on the left is passed.

The village of High Lorton soon appears below, and on the approach thereto there are peeps of the well-known old church near Low Lorton and slightly off the main road. In the churchyard are some ancient yews of great girth, also numerous tombstones which testify to the deserved fame of Lorton for its "long livers." It was here not long ago that "auld" John Gate, ninety-four years old, and his wife Janet, two years younger, buried their son aged seventy-five. On returning from the funeral the old man said, "Ay! ay! Janet, it's ower now! Ah tell't thee many a time we wad nivver rear him!"

In descending into High Lorton from Whin-

latter Pass the second of two left-hand turns should be taken, and the way followed straight on up the village. Then a sharp turn to the right brings one towards the main road up the valley, but on the way thereto it is well to avoid two other turnings on the left, which must first be passed. These somewhat minute directions are given because it is extremely easy to lose the way and much valuable time in the vicinity of Lorton. There is a sharp corner at the signpost, where those coming by the longer ways through Cockermouth or Embleton join the Whinlatter Pass route.

Now the Buttermere mountains begin to take form, with the great, dark mass of Grassmoor on the left gaining grandeur at every turn. At the forking of the roads, which soon occurs, that on the left should be followed; the other goes to Scale Hill and on to Ennerdale and Wastwater without a close sight of Buttermere.

The road now becomes narrower, and mounts upwards at first with a pretty glen alongside, and then to the open heights around the lower slopes of Grassmoor. On the approach to Lanthwaite Green Farm, which is an important place on the return, a gate is revealed somewhat suddenly. Ere long the way lies downward 'midst the golden gorse and bracken to the larches by the lake-side of Crummock. The mountains press close upon the water's edge, and but for the power of blasting powder Rannerdale Knott would bar farther entrance into the dale. Even yet this gale-exposed corner of Horse Point—as the old dalesmen call it

because of an early coaching tragedy—is a constant trouble to the road-men, for at times the whole road threatens to slide off over the precipitous edge into the lake below. The motorist will doubtless recognize its picturesqueness and forgive the usual roughness of surface round the point. Here and beyond, it is well to travel slowly, for the scenery is of the grandest description. Across the lake Mellbreak towers darkly, but away onwards around the valley-head of Buttermere the peaks assume their shapeliest form.

The names hereabouts are curiously appropriate to the butter-making fame of this hill-enfolded hollow. On the left, stern-fronted old Robinson with his Rake below peeps down proudly upon Buttermere, whilst to the right of Honister the Haystacks take prominent part in the surroundings. Then comes High Stile, with its Sour Milk Ghyll for thirsty toilers, and above the Scale Force hollow, Herdhouse and Hen Comb look over Crummock Water—"the Lake of the Cow with the Crumpled Horn."

The sight of the little village nestling in the tree-girt hollow between the lakes helps the idea, but here nowadays are capacious hotels which accommodate the coach-borne crowds who, in the summer-time, swoop down daily upon the quiet retreat. Thus motorists would do well not to linger here later than an hour after midday. They may have time to make the 2-mile run up to Gatesgarth Farm at the entrance to the Honister Pass, and some may care to go a mile

and a half farther up the excellent lower part of the pass-road to the foot of the famous, mountain-side-like gradient.

It is interesting to leave the car by the Maiden Stone, a great rock by the wayside, and walk up half a mile to Hill Step, where the rough road dips over with such startling suddenness. The scarred front of Honister Crag towers 1000 feet overhead, and on the opposite side Yew Crag, also disfigured with slate workings, seems scarcely less impressive.

On the return the first view of Buttermere, where the road keeps close by the shore, may attract attention. The three peaks that spring so finely on the other side of the lake are High Crag, High Stile, and Red Pike; the pass seen winding up to the left of the former peak is for pedestrians only. It runs over Scarf Gap to Ennerdale and Wastwater. Close to the top of the hill before descending into Buttermere Village may be noticed the road on the right which leads up to Buttermere Hause, and this would give the quickest return route to Keswick, some nine miles away, over a steep, rough hill that appeals mostly to hill-hunting enthusiasts.

Then, on passing again through the village, the cottage post-office reminds one that some years ago this remote spot figured in an amusing yet history-making Parliamentary discussion. The late Sir Rowland Hill, when paying one of his many visits to Buttermere, obtained evidence that the high postage rates then prevalent were "pro-

hibitory and demoralizing to the people." Hill happened to encounter a travelling postman proffering a letter to Matty the maid of the cottage. She looked at the letter; but when the demand for payment came, she said indignantly, "Pay sax-pence! I'll do nowt o' t' swort; tak' it wid thee." The postman replied, "Varra weel, suit thyself," and walked off.

Hill was troubled to hear this: he fancied that poverty was the cause of the refusal. But his offer of help brought the answer, "Oh, it's ah reet, sir! The letter was fra my brudder Ben. He's workin' at Peerith, an' we greed when he left he'd write an' say if he'd be hame at Martimas. If he coodna git he'd put a cross on t' left-hand corner, an' if he could he'd put yan on t' reet hand. I got a leuk at t' letter, an' Ben'll be here at Martimas." And Matty went away singing, unknowing that she had helped to the future wealth of nations.

In Scale Force, with its height of 125 feet, the Buttermere district possesses the loftiest of the Lakeland waterfalls. It is situated between Mellbreak and Red Pike, but a visit thence entails some time for the crossing of Crummock Water and for the half-mile walk. There is no road available even for a motor-cycle. The charm of the fall is in its setting, far recessed between lofty, rocky walls and richly verdured. It is the favourite sight in the dale, and for those who make Buttermere the limit of their westerly travel it is well worth the journey.

In making for Ennerdale from Buttermere the

hotel on Scale Hill is first reached, preferably by leaving the main road at Lanthwaite Farm and following a delightful woodland way for nearly a mile. Then from the hotel, which is prettily situated amongst a canopy of foliage, the road dips downward steeply and somewhat roughly. The Scale Hill is scarcely more than 160 yards in length, but in the upper part has several gradients of 1 in 5 and 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. The middle portion is 1 in 8, and at the bottom the descent verges on 1 in 6.

Then the bridge over the Cocker is crossed, and there is a steady uprising past the village of Loweswater until the lake itself appears. The backward views hereabouts of Crummock Water and the Buttermere peaks, with Great Gable and Honister Crag conspicuous, are very fine. Mellbreak, upon the left, gradually assumes a fine outline, and at the foot of Loweswater some picturesque reed and fir foregrounds may be noticed that have lightened the heart and the palette of many a painter. The great, green height so prominent across the lake is Carling Knott, the grandest of blaeberry fells, and one beloved of the fox-hunters.

Loweswater, though situated in the same valley as its two sister lakes, and apparently at first sight part of what was at one time a single sheet of water, is quite of a separate formation. It is 100 feet higher than Crummock Water, and, curiously enough, though char inhabit the other two lakes, they never stray up the river into Loweswater. The $1\frac{1}{4}$ -mile length of the lake is

soon passed, and Fangs Brow rises steep and tortuous in front. Ere long it diverts attention from the magnificent backward prospect where Grassmoor, Robinson, and the bulky peaks on the easterly side of the Buttermere Valley form a splendid background for the little lake of Loweswater, now far below. Mellbreak, nearer still, retains a bold, massive outline.

The climb up the well-known Brow starts easily, but keeps an almost continuous average angle of 1 in 8 for about half a mile. There is a 12-yards' rise of 1 in $6\frac{1}{4}$ half-way up the ascent, and nearer the top, after an almost level middle section, comes a trying continuous stretch of 1 in $6\frac{1}{2}$. When the gradient decreases to 1 in 10, a sign-post will be noticed giving Scale Hill $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles away, and here a sharp turn to the left should not be overlooked. The road now reaches a height of nearly 700 feet and crosses the shoulder of Blake Fell, the seaward bastion of the extensive grassy heights that fodder the hardiest of mountain sheep.

The writer once had a surprising encounter with a grandly horned gentleman of this ilk, locally called "an auld tup." A young shepherd was driving three or four of these animals along the fell road, which, of course, they monopolized to the extent of checking one's speed to less than walking pace. Suddenly the leading tup dashed head downwards at full tilt into the front of the car. By great good fortune, and aided by a swerve in the steering, his head met the front tyre full

squarely. He rebounded like an india-rubber ball and came on again, this time to be thrown to the side of the car, where he simply sat up and looked sheepish. Doubtless it was the surprise of his life. Yet others have not come off so fortunately with these sometime savage animals, and on the lonely mountain roads their movements demand consideration.

As the way skirts round the shoulder of Blake Fell the scene changes. The lakes seem far away, and on the right lie the fair, meadow lands of West Cumberland, wide extended towards the shining sea-line, with the Scotch mountains of Criffel and Bengairn beyond the Firth of Solway. The red surface of the road betokens the approach of the iron-ore country. Then, two miles farther on, the village of Lamplugh is passed, with the sharp right-hand turn where the picturesque gateway of the old Hall stands in front, and the church in close attendance on the other side of the highway.

About one-third of a mile after leaving Lamplugh Church a branch road swerves off to the left, and though somewhat abounding in awkward corners and undulations, it gives an ideal approach to Ennerdale, of the country lane variety. At first the way is mostly uphill, and the ugly mine of Knockmurton stands on the crest of the rise. When the lofty levels are forsaken the bordering hedges flash swiftly past, flower-full and fragrant with honeysuckle, whilst the banks are azured with harebells, gilded with bright yellow vetchlings, and

tufted with the coarser purple vetch and heavy ragwort.

Then the steep hill at Crossdale, $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the parting of the ways, diverts attention with its four sharp turns and gradients of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. Soon Ennerdale Water, grandly mountain-tended, begins to assume the beauty of nearer approach. Straight ahead Bowness Knotts, on the left of the lake, remind one strongly of the projecting Rannerdale mass on Crummock Water, but here, unfortunately, the mountain has barred the road-makers more effectively. After turning sharply to the left in Crossdale village, the real motor way comes practically to an end near the lake-shore at Mireside, almost five miles from Lamplugh, though "rough riders" may care to bump along even up to Gillerthwaite Farm. This lonely dwelling is a mile beyond the head of the lake.

Then the backward way from Mireside may be taken, thinking meanwhile how unfairly is this beautiful lake valley treated in the matter of roads. In this respect it is the most neglected of all the lakes, and this is undoubtedly the reason of its ranking as the *terra incognita* of the district. Yet after the turning to the left has been taken at Croft Foot, which for small cars offers a quick way to Ennerdale Bridge, the view is one that few of the valleys can equal; in fact, only Westwater can at all compare with this rugged, mountain-girt water.

Across the lake rise Revelin and the Grike, with bepinnaled Crag Fell in front, where the curious rift of Robin Hood's chair holds names and

initials dating as far back as 1700. Angler's Crag, still closer, dips sheer down into the deepest part of the lake nearly 150 feet below the surface, and half-way across the breadth a small, dark speck indicates Ennerdale's only island. It is a mere collection of small stones on a pinnacle steeply rising from the depths. Local tradition avers that this curious place was once a hermit's retreat.

But the real glory of Ennerdale is the rocky frontage of the Pillar and the Steeple. These peaks spring skywards grandly on the southerly side of the lonely valley, wherein the Liza glides gaily downward from her lofty birthplace in far-off Gable's sombre solitudes.

The black, outstanding mass on the front of the Pillar, and slightly below its summit, is the Pillar Rock, a favourite haunt of cragsmen, expert and otherwise, from all parts of the world. It was considered inaccessible until 1826, when an Ennerdale man named Atkinson, from Croftfoot Farm, made the first ascent up the side facing Ennerdale Water. There are now above a dozen distinct routes to the top, one of the most famous and most difficult being that up the north side of the vertical columnar mass which is seen in profile from the lower end of the lake. The early Pillarites usually attacked the rock from Ennerdale, but now Wastdale Head is the recognized starting-point.

The dale possesses many quaint associations. The earlier guide-book writers were afraid of the "affrighted spot," and their descriptions scared away all but the hardiest. The following extract,

written in the year 1860, does not sound encouraging: "Ennerdale Lake . . . is so wild in the character of its shores and in its position amongst the mountains as to have caused more terrors and disasters to strangers than any other spot in the district." Strangely enough, the idea still lingers, and doubtless the tragedies of the great rock that guards the dale will perpetuate the undeserved reputation.

Amongst the numerous local stories, that about the "girt dog" still rouses most interest amongst the natives. Rather more than a hundred years ago this wild animal stirred the dalesmen into tremendous excitement. For five months, despite the use of fire-arms, traps, and every other known means of capture, "t' girt dog" continued its ravages amongst the sheep and farm stock. One story runs that on a certain Sunday morning the church service was disturbed by a noise outside the building, and the whispered words "t' girt dog" were heard amongst the menfolk. Immediately the clergyman was the only male worshipper present, and in a few minutes the ladies softly and silently vanished away. Even the parson could not linger with the empty benches, and soon he was in full chase also. Sad to say, when he passed the second field from the church his congregation were found to a man—ay, and even woman—crowding round the cock-pit where the local "fancy" was pitted against the Pardshaw pet.

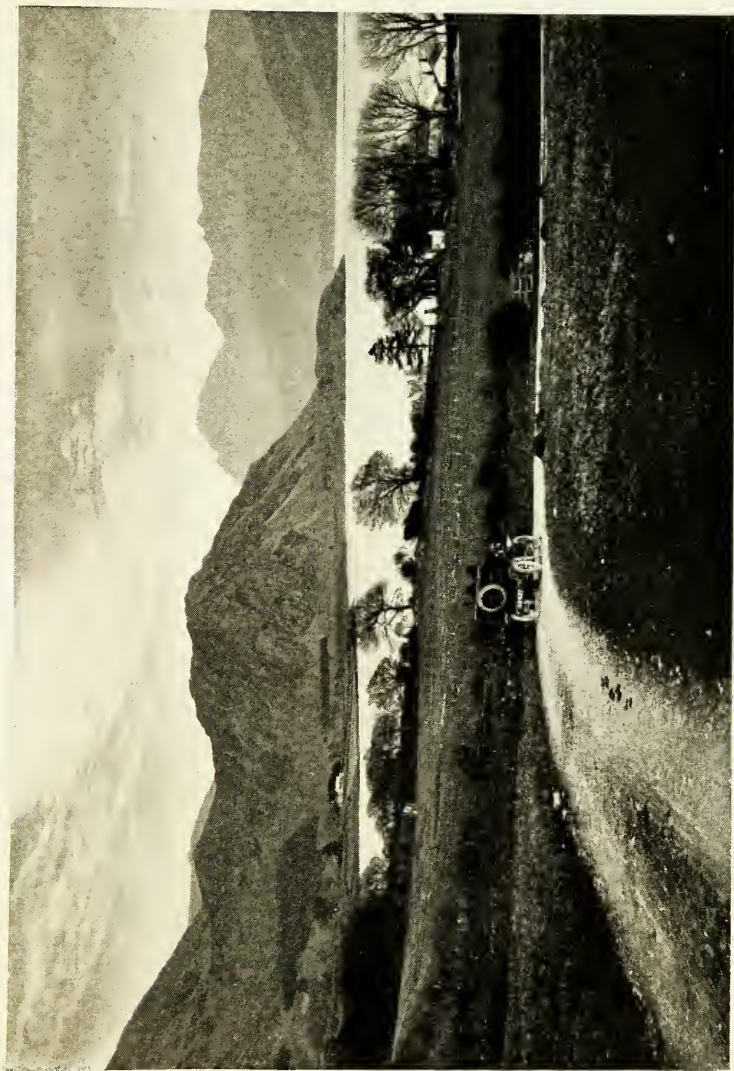
It is a run of about a mile and a half from Mireside by Croftfoot to a turning on the left which

leads down and back somewhat to the Angler's Inn. This way by Croftfoot is rougher and narrower than that obtained by returning to Crossdale: a point worth noting for large cars. The old hotel has recently been burnt down, but the new one has still the same beautiful and romantic situation on the lake's edge. It is unique in the Lake country to be able to dine directly above the sound of the rippling water, and, moreover, watch the wonderful spring-time sunset afterglow on the icy crest of the grand old Pillar, its jagged crags gleaming ochreous and huge amidst the snows.

There is only one finer sight in the district, and that is a sunset over Ennerdale as seen from the Pillar Rock itself. With its wide westward opening, this unappreciated valley is unrivalled for its show of evening glory when the sun, a vermilion ball, sinks into the distant sea and black night creeps slowly up from the lonely valley depths.

It is only $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the Angler's Inn to Ennerdale Bridge, passing quaint old How Hall, dated 1566, on the way, and here the main road is again joined, which has come from Lamplugh, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles away, by Kirkland. Though the finest views and most impressive features of Ennerdale are not so well appreciated, the driver of a large car would enjoy more peace of mind in journeying on to Ennerdale Bridge before turning off the main road to the Angler's Inn.

The way now lies towards Wastwater. It begins with a climb up the interesting hill from Ennerdale Bridge to the open moor, and the best



ENNERDALE WATER FROM THE ENNERDALE BRIDGE ROAD

THE ANGLER'S INN LIES BY THE LAKE-SHORE ON THE RIGHT. THE PILLAR IS THE DISTANT, CENTRAL MOUNTAIN; BOWNESS POINT IS THE NEARER MASS ON THE LEFT

plan is to make direct for Cleator, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles away, and thence through Egremont to Calder Bridge, 10 miles distant from Ennerdale Bridge. The road after the climb out of the Ennerdale depression has little in the way of hills to vary the comparatively level running. The left bank of the River Ehen, which flows from Ennerdale Water, is followed for about three miles; here there is an important right-hand turn and the river is crossed. The village of Wath is only half a mile away, and here comes a wide turn to the left to the main road leading unmistakably on to Egremont.

The contrast meanwhile between this mining country and the land of lakes and mountains so close at hand is remarkable. The red of the iron ore is all-predominating. The road and the hedge-rows are red, the houses are red, and the people are red also. But it is not the ruddiness with which Nature paints the open-air men of those mountain heights which, with all their wealth of health, look down on this unpleasing evidence of the unhealth of wealth.

Then beyond Egremont the fresh air of the fields and the fells is felt once more. The highway follows over the foothills, at one time down in some tree-girt hollow, at another high up under the open sky, with the sea and the mountains on either hand. Thus through avenues of oaks and beeches the way winds into Calder Bridge.

There is another and shorter way of reaching this village which deserves mention. At the hill-

top, about a quarter of a mile after leaving Ennerdale Bridge, a signpost will be noticed which points to a well-surfaced road and gives Calder Bridge as $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant. This is the old mountain road over Cold Fell. There is a fair amount of excellent, smooth running, but it is as steep on one short section as 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$, and ornamented with numbers of uncomfortable water-channels.

As a recompense the route offers magnificent views, especially when the snow-tipped peaks of Scawfell peer over the wild, wide-stretching wastes of heath and bracken. The steep descent to Calder Abbey, ere the village of Calder Bridge is reached, discloses many a glorious seaward prospect towards Black Combe. The spring-time foliage rises in rich contrast against the far-distant span of blue, where in the north-west the Isle of Man hangs like a grey cloud on the horizon. The entrance to the old and interesting Abbey of the Calder, founded in 1134 by Ranulph des Meschines, lies a few yards to the left after the last steep descent from Cold Fell. There are pretty glimpses of the old ruin from the motor way through the richly wooded glen. It used to be closed to the public, but may be seen nowadays on Fridays, between the hours of ten and four.

The 2-mile run from Calder Bridge to Gosforth reveals the first glimpse of the Wastdale depression. Yet that striking sight of Scawfell Pike and Scawfell, with the gap of Mickledore between, must not distract attention from the steep descent into the village. Moreover, Gosforth is

one of the most important road junctions on the west coast, and some care is required in choosing the right road to Wastdale Head. Strands, four miles away, should be the first objective.

There is a world-famous runic cross in the Gosforth churchyard, a cast of which is now in South Kensington. Though it is fully visible in passing along the roadway, some may care to stay and look more closely at the strange sculpturings which, in quaint commingling of Pagan and Christian emblem, illustrate the Scandinavian mythology most wonderfully. The Tree of Life, Time, and the Universe are portrayed with the armed Odin on his horse Sleipnir. Heimdall, the Warder of Asgard, restrains the savage wolves, Skioll and Hati, in their attack on the sun and moon. This and much else which no man can understand is carved on the unique, old monolith.

Nearly four miles from Gosforth, a road which swerves to the left and affords a shorter but rougher way to Wastwater is best avoided. Strands and the long hill leading thereto are best reached by turning to the right. All the while the mountains loom closer and closer, but always more or less screened by the rich beauty of the woodland approach.

But now less brightness comes through the leafy canopy; a steep hill slants up through the close-pressing larches, and finally a gateway leads out amongst the bare rocks and heathy uplands. The lake lies close below under the sombre shadow of the all-o'erpowering Screes. Its massive

frontage of storm-riven crags extends for three miles along the opposite shoreline.

The great bastions are split from base to summit by many a tremendous gully, each black in its far depths except where a tiny torrent flutters white and thread-like over the deep-set, shadowy verge. Purple and olive and gold are the prevailing colours, but here and there a grey or pale yellow scar marks the step of time even on these "everlasting hills." Huge masses often break away and crash into the lake with a mighty uproar. Eighteen years ago the collapse of a "girt lump as big as Manchester Town Hall" caused such stir in Wastdale as has probably "nivver bin known syn t' Flud." A great "tidal wave" swept up the valley. The noise was so terrible even at Wastdale Head that the end of the world was deemed to be at hand, and a special service was held in the church.

Yet even this made little change in the contour of the Screes, and there is plenty left to make Wastwater the most impressive of all the English Lakes; in fact, in Great Britain there is not a passable motor road which can bring one into such close contact with the wild beauty and savage grandeur of mountain and lake combined. The sight of Loch Coruisk in Skye from the Scavaig end is probably the only scene that could compare with this, but there, unfortunately, no road is available.

Then the way winds on towards Wastdale Head, and those glorious peaks at the lake-head beckon one onwards to the inner mountain sanctuary.

There stands Great Gable, a magnificent central figure, with the grim old Pikes of Scawfell crouching on the right, in contour like unto some great lion with paws downstretched towards the dale. On the left of Gable there is Kirkfell, strong and stern of outline, whilst in front the rugged form of Yewbarrow, bare, unkempt, and treeless, like all its neighbours, stands forth from the serried ridges that fling forwards from the Pillar's portentous precipices.

On the right, overlooking the grandest view of the lake, there will be noticed a stone shelter thus placed by the late Squire of Wastdale. It is not beautiful, but motorists may well forgive its ugliness for the sake of the owner's strong initiative and constant advocacy of the new road over the Sty Head Pass, of which more later.

It is a somewhat hilly and altogether interesting ride to the Inn at Wastdale Head, a full mile beyond the head of the lake. Thus far the surface has been excellent, but now it deteriorates steadily. Speedy travel is impossible and inadvisable 'midst such varying array of mountain beauty. At one point, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles after leaving the Strands end of the lake, a gate, which had a chequered career in its wooden days, demands a sudden halt. This is specially worth remembering on the return journey, for the gate nestles most deceptively, hidden over the crest of a steep little bridge.

At the head of the lake Scawfell Pike assumes pride of place as the loftiest of our English mountains, with its more craggy compeer, Scawfell,

on the right and the jagged gap of Mickledore between. The sight recalls other unique features hereabouts, for Wastwater, with its depth of 258 feet, is the deepest of all the lakes, and, curiously enough, the odd 58 feet are lower than the level of the sea. This great depth accounts for the fact that Wastwater has never been known to freeze.

Then as the end of the dale draws near the little white church, with its circlet of sable yews, appears on the right. It is said to be the smallest church in England, which is, of course, a disputed fact. Anyhow, the quaint building is the principal sight of the place. It measures externally 42 x 16 feet, and has not sufficient seating accommodation for the population, which at present is given as thirty-six. In the churchyard there is a tombstone which rouses the thought that sometimes the peaceful dale is visited by terrible tragedy. Wastdale is the haunt of the cragsmen, and the epitaph on the granite base refers to the loss of four expert enthusiasts on the perilous face of Scawfell Pinnacle.

"One moment stood they as the angels stand
High in the stainless imminence of air,
The next they were not, to their Fatherland
Translated unaware."

In the hotel at Wastdale Head are records, pictorial and otherwise, of the greatest of many British mountaineers who have learnt and practised their craft on the homeland heights. There are reminders of men who have left their footmarks and, alas! sometimes their bodies also on the far-off Himalayas, the frosty Caucasus, the Alps, and the Andes.

Sad as some of the memories are, the place speaks more of the joy of health and happiness of the most elevating and grandest of all sports; and as long as Englishmen are worthy of the name, the conquest of the world's high places will appeal irresistibly to the sound in mind and body. Those who arrive at Wastdale Head about Easter-time or Christmas will have practical demonstration that there is no diminution in this mountain enthusiasm. Unless beds are booked at least three months in advance, they may not find room for repose even on the billiard-table or in the barn. At such times there may be difficulty in effecting an entrance into the hotel, for the hall is often strewn with fearsome-looking climbing-boots, and ropes, ice-axes, and ruck-sacks are piled everywhere. In the summer season Wastdale is not crowded, for its habitués are amongst the Alps and the world's more distant ranges.

It was here also that "Auld" Will Ritson lived until 1879 and amused innumerable visitors. He entertained poets, professors, scientists, and men of deeds as well as words from the great outside world. He beat de Quincey at a "fratch," and threw Christopher North twice out of three times without serious trouble. Doubtless the third time was conceded as a matter of policy. "Auld" Will was really the king of the dale. Whatever the argument, he always had the last word, be the subject sporting, political, or otherwise. If some learned listener tried to lead the argument, Will could always fall back on the broadest Cumberland

“mak’ o’ talk,” which none could understand excepting his local followers. Thus were the great men oft-times silenced with rough side-play.

However, Wastdale Head now sees nothing of those days of revel; normally it is a silent and peaceful spot, with little to delay the motor-wanderer. Piers Ghyll is the nearest bit of savage mountain scenery, and the walk thither up the lower part of Sty Head Pass will require an hour each way. It gives a splendid idea of this wild dale-head. Also, the visit shows what magnificent scenery will be brought to the public ken should the road over Sty Head Pass become an established fact. It is strange to stand on those rocky slopes and think that only five miles away is the Borrowdale highway leading to Keswick, some nine miles farther northwards. Yet at present the journey to the latter town by the shortest route entails the covering of over 45 miles of circuitous roadway.

Those returning to Keswick from Wastdale Head will probably prefer to take a slightly varied route, which, though longer in distance and lacking in picturesqueness, offers the better travelling. After reaching Cleator, as usual, through Gosforth, Calder Bridge, and Egremont, it is an excellent plan to make direct for Embleton.

The way lies at first through Frizington and Rowrah to Kelton Head. Thence the main road is followed by Lamplugh Cross to the left and on past the newly made section by Mockerkinn Tarn, avoiding Pardshaw and speeding over the splendid levels past the Beehive Inn, an important landmark

on the right. About a mile and a half beyond this place there comes a sharp turn to the right past Paddle Schools. A mile and a half farther, tending to the left, a bridge leads over the River Cocker. Then soon the crossing of the Cockermouth-Lorton highway gives access to the narrower direct road to Embleton, and thence Keswick-wards.

CHAPTER XI

THE MOTOR IN LAKELAND
MOUNTAINEERING

“Looked from the peak to the limitless distance,
Mountain and sea in the rain and the sun,
Tasted the intimate joy of existence—
Labour accomplished and victory won.”

A. D. GODLEY

THERE is an old description of an ascent of Skiddaw in 1794 which states: “One of the party was so astonished at the different appearance of objects so far beneath us that he expressed a desire to lose blood.” Should those who only know Lakeland from the roads be tempted up to the heights, they would appreciate in some degree the astonishment of those early mountaineers.

Yet, after all, it is only from the mountains that the real beauty and grandeur of the district can be understood. Moreover, for the average healthy-minded mortal there is pleasure, both æsthetic and physical, in topping England's highest ground. Aided by his car, the motor traveller may save time and exertion in his lofty quest; the healthiness of the diversion is also indisputable. He may not lose in the same way as the early climbers, but the motorist will shed some of that adiposity which so

easily besets us in these days when "nobody walks if they can ride."

Fortunately, unlike North Wales, we have no mountain railways, nor do our main roads, like those over Llanberis Pass and the Nant Ffrancon, rise up to and beyond the 1000-foot level in the very heart of the heights. For Scawfell Pike, our highest point, the motor is of little service in gaining actual height. Though ponies may be taken part of the way at considerable personal discomfort, the best way is on foot, and the same may be said of all the most interesting mountains. Skiddaw alone is the exception, as is indicated by the lines—

"Auld wives and bairns on jackasses
To tippy twop may ride."

The local industry in the hiring of mountain ponies and guides has almost died out, like the old superstition that peopled the lesser-known craggy fastnesses with demons and evil spirits. Good tracks can be easily followed in fine weather, and with nailed boots, a compass, map, and common sense it should nowadays be possible to go anywhere. Yet only two years ago the lack of the latter was shown. On harmless old Skiddaw two ladies, misled by mist, climbed over a wall, decided they were lost, and hid in the shelter of the wall for the night and most of the succeeding day. In the evening, after all the district had been roused, a search party discovered them and brought them valleywards.

The hints given herein are not for such, nor

for rock-climbers who know every cranny of the crags, but simply for those who wish to explore the grandest of the Lake-district mountains which are amenable to approach by the motor. Luckily, the best mountain of all, Great Gable, is in this way the most easily attainable of all the Lakeland peaks. It is grand to look at, grand to climb, and grander still as a view-point. There is little difficulty in understanding the pride of a well-known octogenarian rambler who had reached the top a hundred times. Moreover, the Gable has more individual character than any of its neighbours; its crags of weird shape are world famous, and their overwhelming interests for the cragsmen have invested the mountain with a tragic history.

Undoubtedly the most fascinating and easiest way up Great Gable is to motor from Keswick up Borrowdale to Seatoller, and thence reach the top of Honister Pass by the new road. This has been recently built and belongs to the Slate Company, who ask the modest toll of 8d. for its use by the motor-car. The gate, which gives access to the new road on the right at the foot of the old mountain-side-like route, is usually locked, but the key can be had in Seatoller village close at hand.

It is a steepish 2-mile climb up to Honister Hause, but, once through the first gateway, the gradient never exceeds 1 in 6. The height at the top is 1190 feet, and that of Great Gable is 2949 feet; thus the amount of the remaining actual ascent entails only a mere stretching of muscles for those who have sat

in a car all the morning. However, this artificial means of locomotion must now be left in the care of some of the genial quarry-men on the Hause, and a way made up by the side of the tramway incline which ends at the Drumhouse, so conspicuous on the skyline to the left of Honister Crag. Ugly as it is, this landmark may be considered the most beautiful sight in the world should dense mist and storm assail a descending party who have lost their way.

At this place the path ends, and it is necessary to bear away to the left across the open mountain-side. A course almost due south-west is best: the idea being to skirt easily around the slopes of Grey Knotts, the peak on the left, and its farther neighbour, Brandreth. This plan gives a very gradual ascent, and soon Great Gable will be seen peeping over the fell-side in front. At some wire railings—a most convenient landmark—it is advisable to turn to the left, and more or less follow these somewhat steeply up to the upper ridge of Green Gable.

The views meanwhile on this high level walk are superb. First there is a ravishing peep down into the depths of the Buttermere Valley, with Crummock Water and Loweswater beyond. The rugged backbone of the High Stile and Red Pike mass separates the fertile depression from sombre, treeless Ennerdale; but from the crest of Green Gable the lake relieves the sternness, and away beyond, the meadow-lands border the lazule line of the sea.

Great Gable now rises stern and massive in front, and care should be used, especially in misty

weather, to avoid the big crags on its northerly face by keeping to the left, where may be found a somewhat indefinite track. The last 300 feet are short and steep, but nothing more than ordinary walking is necessary. "Overheating" may be troublesome on the 1 in 2, and advocates of "water cooling" should remember that Great Gable is a dry mountain. Sometimes water can be found in Wind Gap, the depression between Great and Green Gable, but usually it is best to take in a good supply on the slopes of Brandreth. As usual in such matters the poet's "perennial fountain" on the top of Great Gable is a myth. It is a hollow in the summit rock which collects rain-water, flies, and the remains of other people's lunches.

The remarkable feature of Great Gable is its central situation; thus it provides an unequalled outlook over many of the Lake-country valleys. Borrowdale and the depression of the Derwent extend northwards to Skiddaw with Scotland beyond; in the east Windermere is seen over the Langdales; whilst the south-west and westerly hollows of Ennerdale and Buttermere are less favourably seen than from Green Gable.

The best plan is to descend to the south-west for about 200 yards to the Westmorland Cairn, which was built by some local cragsmen of that name to locate the finest mountain view in England. Here the rugged south-west front of our mountain is seen in all its savage grandeur, with the huge frontal precipices of Scawfell Pike and Scawfell rising in one tremendous sweep from the den of



WASTWATER AND WASTDALE HEAD FROM GREAT GABLE

THIS TYPICAL MOUNTAIN SCENE IS LOOKING SEA-WARDS. THE SCREES RISE ON THE LEFT OF THE LAKE. THE THIN WHITE LINE OF THE ROAD CAN BE SEEN WINDING UP TO THE HAMLET WITH ITS WHITE-FRONTED INN AND COTTAGES TO MATCH

Wastdale. Grotesque rocks rise out of the depths at our feet.

It is a popular guide-book error to say that one of these is the Napes Needle. This pinnacle of isolated rock cannot be seen from anywhere in the near vicinity. It is far below and hidden under the clustering crags of the Napes, whose jagged saw-like crest is such a feature of the valleyward view from Westmorland's Cairn. None but those specially intimate with the great cliffs and storm-shattered ridges on the Wastdale front of Great Gable could possibly find the Needle from the top of the mountain. To the tyro it would match the proverbial problem of the needle in a haystack. Thousands attempt this unsuccessfully, and it should be useful to know that the famous rock is best approached by following an indefinite tract that skirts across the south-west front of Great Gable from near the top of Sty Head Pass. Motorists could most easily reach this from Seathwaite. The rock lies close against the foot of one of the biggest cliffs on the Napes, which stand out so conspicuously and unmistakably when seen from Sty Head.

Even for expert rock-climbers the ascent of the Needle is a difficult problem. The ease with which it can be photographed from a convenient terrace on the adjacent mountain-side, known as the Dress Circle, has led to the picture receiving much popular attention. Climbing parties often become victims of the camera fiend. A press photographer once wasted a dozen plates during an ascent by the writer in the hopes, as he afterwards said, of securing a

snapshot of an accident. He seemed annoyed at the failure.

But let us now return to the top of Great Gable, thinking meanwhile, perhaps, of the aptness of the name of Hell Gate for that chaotic, craggy rift by which we mount. The huge, outstanding mass of the Napes, its rocky bastions garbed in wondrous shades of grey and red, and ledges fringed with the most golden of greens, is more puzzling in its derivation. The following lines offer at least a pleasing answer to the question regarding the origin of the name of the Napes—

“Napes Needle ! ever pointing high,
In rolling mist or azure sky
Tall, tantalizing, tapery ;
Would’st say : Ere days of inch or ell
I sewed the vesture of the fell,
And broidered Nature’s napery ?”

Then on the opposite or northerly front of Great Gable we may see another of the mountain’s curiosities. By peering cautiously over the precipitous edge, it is possible to discover the ruins of an old hut on a broad, heathery ledge. This was the haunt long ago of Old Moses, the smuggler, who made the best whisky in Cumberland ; at least this latter was the reason given for the constant return of Moses and his “ worm ” from the clutches of the excise officers. In those days quite a good packhorse road skirted this front of Great Gable, and on the Wastdale side a curious rock, known as Moses’ Finger, served as a guide-post at night-time during the transit of the smuggled spirit from

the crags down to the Moses' Sledgate, as the track is still called.

With the car awaiting us on Honister Hause there is no variation way of descent available. Those who are so fortunately situated as to possess a driver who could take the car around to Seathwaite would be well advised to descend the long, grassy slopes to Sty Head Tarn, and thence from the Sty Head Pass to Seathwaite.

This plan of combining mountaineering and motoring in the ascent of a peak from one side and descending by another is one which a professional driven party may use to great advantage. By no other means is it possible to gain so conveniently such knowledge and experience of a mountain in a single day. In this respect Helvellyn (3118 feet high) is characteristic. Wythburn, with its approximate height of 600 feet above sea-level, provides the shortest and quickest way to the top. The distance is less than 2 miles, and two hours' time should suffice for the ascent. Presuming the car has been sent round by the Vale of St. John and Troutbeck to Patterdale, the descent can be made either by Swirrel Edge or Striding Edge, both of which provide wonderful views, and a tinge of adventure withal for those who have imbibed the thrilling romances of this district.

It is a very common experience to encounter disconsolate travellers on Helvellyn top, who fear to launch away over the steep, upper slopes that lead down on to the crest of either of these twin Edges. It was once the fortune of the writer and

a friend to encounter two newly married motoring-folk in such a plight. Their car had been sent around to Patterdale; moreover, arrangements made to dine that evening with some nervous relatives caused many misgivings. They had spent two hours on a terrace half-way down the slope; courage to move up or down had failed them; even the cool shade induced by the sinking sun had no effect.

On our arrival the lady proved the pluckier of the two, and she was in due course conducted to the safe crest of Striding Edge. Then came the tragedy. Despite all persuasion, physical and otherwise, the gentleman refused to move up or down. It was only the final sight of the youthful bride disappearing over the distant end of the Edge with a handsome, unknown stranger that finally calmed his apprehensions of personal danger. He allowed himself to be practically carried down the slope; an hour later, there was a joyful reunion when the absconding bride was overtaken.

In fine summer weather any ordinary pedestrian, unless he choose to jump over some of the small cliffs, should find neither danger nor difficulty in the descent of either of the Edges. Such places always look much steeper from above than they are in actual reality, and the fact that stones and boulders lie at rest on the slopes that are used for descent will show that gravitation would have a like effect on a human being. Under snowy or icy conditions the Edges should be avoided except by expert mountaineers. The mountain was in this

dangerous state when the Gough accident of 1805 happened, and when, according to the poets, the faithful hound suffered so thin a time of it. Those practically concerned in the affair averred otherwise. At such times, and for those with unfriendly feelings regarding either of the two Edges, it is advisable to follow northwards along the top of the mountain until the pony-track descending to the left side of Keppel Cove Tarn is noticed. Then there is an unmistakable way to the lead-mines and Glenridding.

Excepting for the approach to the base of the mountain, the motor-car is practically useless in visiting Scawfell Pike. On the Keswick, or northerly side, Seathwaite marks the end of the road, and from Windermere the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel at Langdale Head is the limit of mechanical progress. Considerate motorists would be well advised to leave their cars at the New Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, and walk the rough intervening three-quarters of a mile. Those located on the west coast would find the climb from Wastdale Head the quickest of all, though it is the steepest and most fatiguing of the three routes mentioned.

The ascent from Seathwaite is recommended beyond all others ; it is the least tiring, and the scenery is the most varied and impressive. To cross Scawfell Pike from this direction and rejoin the car at Wastdale Head is scarcely advisable ; from Seathwaite to Wastdale Head is a 60-mile drive, unless Honister Pass is crossed, which would be an unwise proceeding. Yet when the much-discussed and much-needed road over Sty Head

Pass is made, less than seven miles will divide the two villages.

No climber of Scawfell Pike should fail to see the vastly more interesting and beautiful neighbouring peak of Scawfell. The ridge of Mickledore—the great gap which connects the two—can be reached in a quarter of an hour's time, and by taking a curving course away to the right the rough stony ground can be avoided considerably. From near the outstanding Pulpit Rock, about 200 yards to the right of the beginning of Mickledore Ridge, the great cliffs of Scawfell look stupendous, and so inaccessible that it is easy to echo the old dalesman's opinion, "Nought but a fleein' thing can gan up theer!" Yet there are now over a dozen ways up those vertical, frontal rifts and massive bulwarks, for every gully and buttress has been explored and scaled by expert cragsmen.

Scawfell is world-famous for its magnificent rock-climbing; it ranks with the Pillar Rock as the grandest and soundest crag in Britain. Some may care to wander on the broad ledge below the frowning precipice, where, under a massive height of nearly 600 feet, the syenitic bastions plunge their foundations into the solid mountain-side. Man seems strangely small shut in by such an immensity of grandeur and power. This feeling is deepened by the sight of a small cross which has been cut in the rock; it marks the spot where, from far overhead, four cragsmen were flung to their doom. Truly, Scawfell has a rough way with those who treat him and the force of gravitation with disrespect.

The Pillar Mountain, with its remarkable rock overlooking the lonely valley of Ennerdale, is another of the most famous peaks that is not easily accessible to the motorist. Wastdale Head gives the easiest way up the mountain itself, but, for the average pedestrian, the poorest idea of the rock. A walk up the Ennerdale Valley from the Angler's Inn, or preferably from Gillerthwaite Farm, if the motorist does not object to a little "rough riding," shows the most impressive architecture of this "cathedral of crags" to the best advantage.

In the latter case the Angler's Inn need not be visited, but the main road followed to the left, about a mile beyond Ennerdale Bridge, thus passing Crossdale; at Mireside the road deteriorates rapidly, some might say it disappears.

Hardy walkers may prefer to cross the bridge over the Liza River just short of Gillerthwaite, and thus follow a slanting upward course to the top of the Pillar Mountain. The feature to aim for on the skyline is Windy Gap, the depression between the Steeple and the Pillar Mountain. The latter has a height of 2927 feet, and the top of the Pillar Rock is about 500 feet lower. This happy hunting-ground of the cragsman has few new spoils left to reward the searcher after virgin routes. Until 1826, when it was climbed by the west side, the rock was considered inaccessible; there are now-days over a dozen quite distinct ways to the top, and only last year a new route was found up the impossible-looking, north-easterly precipice.

Turning to some mountains that loom more

largely in the motorist's eye in his Lakeland wanderings, shapely old Skiddaw, from his height alone, is a prominent favourite. "O! its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountain all about and about, making you giddy, and then Scotland afar off, and the border counties so famous in song and in ballad. It was a day that will stand out like a mountain, I am sure, in my life." Thus wrote the city-loving Charles Lamb before it became fashionable to climb Skiddaw, and, accordingly, pen pæans of praise upon the performance.

Yet with all its height (3054 feet) and all its fame, the actual ascent is the dulllest in the district. The summit is too distant from the Lake country valleys and mountains, and in itself Skiddaw is singularly featureless. Motorists can curtail the six-mile walk from Keswick to the top considerably. Applethwaite, with its orchards and its lanes sheltering under the gorse-clad heathery slopes, should first be gained. Thence, after inquiry, the road may be found and followed up the steep hill behind Underscar. Half a mile above Applethwaite the car may be safely left in the shelter of the trees, and the mountain-road, which now becomes rougher, continued on foot until the ordinary track from Keswick is joined near the open mountain-side below the first steep ascent to the Skiddaw Hut. For the descent it is an exhilarating change to leave the ordinary track close under the summit and make for the Low Man. Thence, after enjoying the view, which is really better than

that from Skiddaw High Man, we may plunge down the heathery slopes direct to the road above Applethwaite.

Saddleback as a view-point largely resembles its loftier neighbour Skiddaw; it suffers from a distant insularity. But the mountain itself is much more interesting. Like the ribs of some recumbent monster, its skeleton-like ridges slant up confusedly to the central backbone of the height, and, hidden under the still bonier, northerly shoulder, there shelters the gem-like mountain tarn of Scales. For the healthy in mind and body there is always a charm in scaling

“The peak that stormward bares an edge
Ground sharp in days when Titans warred.”

To such, the ridge, Narrow Edge by name, which rises from the main Keswick-Penrith highway just to the right of Threlkeld mines, will appeal strongly. The motorist could leave his car at the latter place and easily follow this ridge until it culminates at Saddleback's summit cairn.

Others with simpler tastes for imaginary perils may prefer to drive a mile or so farther to Scales village, and thence mount the usual gradual grassy slopes to the summit. In either case, the highest part should not be left without a northerly stroll towards the edge of the deep recess that holds Scales Tarn in its thousand-foot depths. Sharp Edge, jagged and saw-like in contour, rises on the left. The descent by this real ridge, the narrowest of its kind in Lakeland, will increase the climber's

respect for Saddleback. For the firm of foot and steady of head the danger is more apparent than real. Under icy conditions Sharp Edge entails real alpine practice. A properly equipped party once took four hours in the ascent.

There are two little picnicking peaks in the Vale of Derwentwater that, once known, would appeal strongly to motoring parties in search of fresh air and prospects new. The summit of Catbells is less than an hour's walk from the little-frequented main road around Derwentwater. To rest on the heathery crest of the peak, with island-dotted Derwentwater below, all wood and mountain enfolded, conveys a sense of lofty isolation seldom experienced at such comparatively low elevations.

On the opposite or easterly side of the valley Walla Crag, though lacking in insularity, provides a surprising outlook over the fertile valley basin, with Scotland filling in the distant northerly horizon beyond Bassenthwaite Water. A good road enables the car to be driven up to the 800-foot level at Rake Foot Farm. The summit of Walla Crag, where gale-shriven pines shelter the most velvety of turfy couches, is little more than 400 feet higher, and the ascent can easily be made in half an hour's time.

On the Windermere side of the district the Red Screes above Kirkstone Pass prove most attractive considering the ease of approach. From the Kirkstone Inn (1500 feet) the ascent to the summit (2541 feet above sea-level) should scarcely occupy more than an hour, and the zigzag route 'midst the

craggy knolls and parsley-fern-clad terraces is always interesting. The exceeding extensiveness and grandeur of the view from the Red Screes is practically unknown and unappreciated. None of the lakes can equal Windermere as an adornment to a mountain-top prospect, and here the graceful beauties of the river-lake are disclosed unstintingly. Of the surrounding mountains the rugged central giants around Great Gable and Scawfell Pike crouch in extended array, whilst bulk rather than beauty is represented by the north-westerly barriers of Helvellyn and St. Sunday's Crag.

For motor parties Loughrigg Fell (1101 feet) is the most accessible of the Ambleside heights, and from the upper part of Red Bank the climb, after leaving the car, may be made most leisurely in half an hour. The fell stands forth splendidly as the central hub from which four main valleys radiate, and this is the secret of the remarkable variety of the scene from the summit.

More need not be said of the fascinations and opportunities of adapting the motor to mountain travel. Those familiar with the Lake country will easily recall many other suitable excursions, and when the wonderful west trunk roads over the passes of Wrynose and Sty Head are made, a world of new and lofty interest will be made attainable.

Nowadays, in the busy season we hear much of the "overcrowded Lakes." The flood, or tide, of traffic—the latter perchance proving the better word because of the morning flow and evening ebb—may

surge through the popular vales, but it seldom rises higher than the lowland mists. The lonely solitude of the fells and their silent tarns, as well as most of the outlying lakes, are regions separate. Fortunate is the motorist who can enter into their delights.

CHAPTER XII

A LATE AUTUMN RUN THROUGH JOHN PEEL'S COUNTRY

"'Twas the sound of his horn brought me from my bed."

HOW the well-known words seemed to tingle in one's ears as we swung round Souterfell, and into the sleepy little village of Bowscale! The very words might have been used by those drowsy farm-folk whose heads appeared from many bedroom windows. A motor in the village was evidently an unusual sight, especially on an early Sunday morning, when folk sleep on in Peel-land. The fact that that motor had gone astray was less unusual. We had swung round a blind corner and found only a stone wall in front. "Gan thro' t' yat, an' by t' farm-yard," came the advice from every side. This we did, after opening a hitherto unnoticed gate on the right, and thence onwards.

Thus we found ourselves in John Peel's country. On one hand, steep, heather-clad slopes led up to where darkly purple peaks pushed proudly skyward from a sheen of golden bracken; on the other, the wide, wild moors stretched out towards the dawn, where the pale blue Pennines, thirty miles away,

horizoned the prospect. Not a cloud blotted the typically clear landscape which is such a feature of Lakeland in November—the month of fogs in town, but not in Cumberland.

Rich as is the Lake district in historical and poetical traditions, there are few parts that can surpass the Peel country in these respects. From the scenic point of view this borderland of mountains, with quaint old hamlets ensconced in the heathy foldlets, has a breadth and variety of beauty quite different from the adjacent land of lakes and valleys where all the world wanders. Above all, it is peaceful and quiet. The neglect of this corner of the district, by motorists especially, is utterly inexplicable. Thousands annually pass through Keswick on their way to Scotland: they follow, because others have done the same before them, the dullest, most uninteresting, and ugliest route to Carlisle. Why not travel there through John Peel's country? Even for the hustler this way is three miles shorter than any other. Granted the road is in parts narrow and too engrossing to allow of speed-work, but once more the thought arises,—Who comes to Lakeland for speed?

It is more than ever unwise and unjustifiable to hurry through this distinctive portion of the district, for its charms are a compact of close continuity. Any wandering motorist with a tinge of the sporting instinct in his nature would surely deem it a delightful half-day's expedition to make the circuit of Saddleback and Skiddaw, and incidentally hunt up memories of the most renowned

hunter our country has produced. Then, when the famous, one might almost say national, song "D' you ken John Peel?" is sung, he would be able to answer with truthful gusto—

"Yes! I ken John Peel and Ruby too,
Ranter and Royal and Bellman so true;
From a find to a check, from a check to a view,
From a view to a death in the morning."

Such matters were much in our minds as we sped onwards into this Nimrod's land of mighty deeds. We had come from Keswick on the main road to Penrith to a point a short distance beyond the eighth milestone. There a sharp turn to the left was taken, and the side road—of excellent surface—had been gained. This was to lead us to Caldbeck, the capital of Peel's country, by way of Mungrisdale, Bowscale, and Hesket Newmarket. The northward turn had revealed Saddleback's saw-like crest in all its grandeur, and hidden deep but high in its wild recesses lay Scott's tarn of Scales—

"Where never sunbeam could discern
The surface of that sable tarn,
In whose black mirror you may spy
The stars while noontide lights the sky."

About two miles after leaving the main road, the little village of Mungrisdale appeared in front, and our road wound by a stream as blue as an Alpine sky. Ere long the tumbling waters from an old weather-browned mill stirred the echoes of the deep-set glen, whilst farther mountain-wards, beyond a larch-shaded bridge, there came a jaw-like opening in the confronting heights. A hill of red

rotundity filled in the centre of the deep hollow ; it was well named the Tongue.

Until there came this revelation of Mungrisdale, the long extended front of Souterfell had risen continuously on the left like a huge, thousand-foot grass-covered screen. The mountain is the home of weird superstition, but the natives and some authorities assert that these arise from actual facts. In the early part of 1700 it was a fairly common sight for the local farmers to see spectral figures passing high up across the front of Souterfell. On Midsummer's Eve in 1737 a whole family of the name of Lancaster saw an interminable array of troops marching abreast ; they came from an eminence on the north end of the fell and disappeared in a niche near the summit. Though obviously quite impossible for such manœuvres to be carried out upon such a rough mountain face, some of the farm-men went up next day to search for traces of the horses' feet ; of course none were found. When published abroad, the story of the wonderful sight aroused nothing but disbelief. However, in 1745 came the Lancasters' justification ; for again, on the Midsummer Eve, twenty-six persons expressly summoned by the family saw all that had been seen and more. Carriages were now interspersed with the troops, and everybody knew that no carriage had been, or could be, on the top of Souterfell. The multitude was beyond imagination, for the troops filled a space of half a mile, and marched quickly till night hid them, still marching.

There was nothing vaporous or indistinct about

these spectres, and the witnesses attested the whole story on oath before a magistrate. It now came out that others had seen something of the same sort in other years, but there are no records of the spectral march on Souterfell having been seen in recent times, though there are stories of single figures on horseback galloping at prodigious speed over the precipitous edge. As for the explanation, some authorities discovered that, for instance, on that particular Midsummer Eve of 1745 the rebels were exercising on the western coast of Scotland, and doubtless their movements had been reflected by some transparent layers of vapour similar to the *fata Morgana*.

A "crack" with some of the local worthies brought to light other traditions of the same nature and otherwise. At Bowscale, where the road wound so curiously amongst the farm-yards, there was a wonderful view up into the wild recesses where the river Caldew finds a birthplace in the northern breast of Skiddaw. There was also a utilitarian interest in the scene, for here untold wealth has been distributed in the successful quest for wolfram, the precious substance so much used for electrical details in the far-off world. The mine, like most others in the district, has had a chequered career; it is now closed. This has always been a specially favoured mining neighbourhood, and company promoters know full well the most precious metals that may be wrung therefrom.

Then the fell-road that ran up the left side of the valley from Bowscale would have taken us up

to Bowscale Tarn, after about three-quarters of an hour's walk. It is a wild crag-encircled sheet of water, and grandly picturesque, with Tarn Crag as background. The place has been immortalized by Sir Walter Scott. Local tradition asserts that in the depths of the Tarn the two immortal fish still have their abode. The homage of these fish is amongst the acknowledgments which are stated by the minstrel in his "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle" to have been paid to the secret power of the good Lord Clifford, when a shepherd boy in adversity.

"And both the undying fish that swim
In Bowscale Tarn, did wait on him ;
The pair were servants of his eye
In their immortality ;
They moved about in open sight,
To and fro, for his delight."

More practical matters now engaged our attention ; sudden sinuosities kept the driver's eye on the road, until, after passing Mosedale, we gradually drew away from the beetling crags of Carrock Fell on the left to the open moorland. Wherever a signpost was utterly unnecessary there it surely appeared ; for instance, an obviously impossible track on the right was labelled "Carlisle," and rigorously avoided. But two miles beyond Bowscale the road, splendid thus far, divided into two of indifferent surface.

There was nothing but loneliness all round ; not even a signpost to befriend us. Our map indicated the turn to the left, probably because to the map-maker it looked most direct. Out of pure contrariness, a favourite theory with some of us on

unknown mountain-roads, we took to the right, and found later that all was well. Ere long, green fields lined the narrow road, the wilds were far behind, and a calf in front. Any animals encountered had shown unmistakably that motors seldom came that way. The only horse encountered had almost turned our day's jaunt into tragedy, and now for half a mile on end the calf galloped straight on in front. All attempts to creep slowly past were fruitless, and finally, after a steady sprint, the animal gradually slowed and then lay down in the middle of the narrow road. There was nothing to do but dismount and appeal to the animal's feelings.

At Hesket Newmarket came the first actual contact with the John Peel element. When we stopped to inspect the curiously ancient and picturesque village well, the "character" of the place hobbled up and told us everything. Of course he was kinsman to Peel—evidently, from others encountered, the usual thing in that district. However, he told us of the bull-baiting days, and pointed out the iron ring still fixed to the ground quite close to the well. On bygone market-days this must have been a lively corner.

Houses dating back to 1600 were common sights thereabouts. The natives must oft-times go cold to bed, for in many cases the stair-ways ran up on the outside of the quaint, old-world houses. The town hall was a study in the antique, bare and unadorned, except where the bill-poster's art seemed to keep it together.

But at Caldbeck, a mile and a half beyond

Hesket Newmarket, we found the greatest interest centred. The village lay snugly ensconced in a drowsy hollow, where the murmuring sound of many waters hung heavy in the still autumn air. The road divided in the centre of the village: that to the left and westward continued in the direction of our arrival. It led up a steep hill and thence on to Uldale, to skirt the base of Skiddaw and back to Keswick. On the right the highway apparently led towards the rolling foothills, and away to Wigton and Carlisle. But that branching of the roads in Caldbeck, with the Inn of the Oddfellows' Arms between, must have misled many motorists. We found that this way to the right should be avoided because there were two rivers to ford. Rather were it better to take the turn to the left, and mount the hill for a few hundred yards until a sharp turn to the right was noticed. There we turned from the backward way to Keswick, and followed the Wigton-Carlisle road downwards to the bottom of a steep hill.

The fascinations of this part of Caldbeck necessitated a considerable halt. The place evidently possessed many natural beauties, and the car was left in the shelter of some cottages on the roadside. Then a short stroll was taken up into the depths of the wonderful gorge locally known as "The Howk." There the turbulent torrent of the Dale Beck had, in Cumbrian phrasing, "howked" out great caves in the solid rock-bed of the chasm. A precarious path skirted the fringe of the precipitous retaining wall, and gave a spice of adven-

ture in obtaining some impressive peeps, to which any camera must fail to do justice.

A visit to John Peel's grave in the Caldbeck churchyard also proved a pleasant pilgrimage. This necessitated a return through the lower part of the interesting old village, for we had already passed the church on our way into Caldbeck. As so little is known of the remarkable huntsman, some points of interest may be mentioned here. The famous song must be considered the main cause of his immortal fame. Its enlivening strains echoed through the trenches in the Crimea, and down through the years they have cheered men of action in many lands. John Peel's spirit and pluck were present in his music at Ladysmith and Mafeking.

The origin of the song savours of romance. One of Peel's closest companions in hunt and home was John Woodcock Graves, who had come to Caldbeck to set up a woollen manufactory. One wild winter night they had met to discuss the next day's hunt. The wind swept a raging snowstorm across the moors, but indoors all was cheery, and, whilst the old friends chatted, the voice of Graves' mother was heard in another room hushing one of his children to sleep with the favourite old Cumberland ballad called "Bonnie Annie."

Somehow the lilt of the air wove itself into the mind of Graves, and seemed to set itself to the doings of Peel and the hunt. There and then he wrote the now famous words on the back of the hunt record which they had been perusing. When finished, Graves sang it off to the tune of "Bonnie

Annie." At the close he looked up at Peel: the tears were streaming down the old man's face. Thus was the immortal song brought into the world. Neither of the men dreamt of its future, but Graves, when he had finished, perchance realized that somewhat of a miracle had happened. He said, "You will be sung, John, when you and me have been run to earth."

The hunting men of the far north seized upon the stirring song. Its fame spread, but not apace until the tune as now used was composed and added by William Metcalf, the late choirmaster of Carlisle Cathedral. The song was written in 1830, and all concerned in its production lived to hear of its success.

As a man John Peel was a remarkable figure. He stood over six feet in height. Tireless in mind and body, he was described by a Caldbeck veteran as "terble lang in th' leg an' lish as a lizard, wid a fine gert neb an' grey eyes what could see for ivver." These were great advantages, for it should be understood that most of his hunting was perforce done on foot, as it is to-day, amongst the crags and fells of Cumberland. Forty or fifty miles a day over some of the roughest ground in Britain were nothing to Peel.

Latterly his favourite mare Binsey carried him on the lowland hunts, but his true passion was for the mountains. His hounds, especially those immortalized in the song, seemed "like personal friends." They appeared to understand his speech, and when he spoke to them sharply they were known to have

wandered afar, or to hide themselves in the woods for two or three days unless he expressed sorrow for the cause. His friends say now that those dogs knew as much about hunting as their master, and more than any other sportsman in the chase.

Peel's marriage to Mary White was typical of the man. The maid's mother heard first of the proposed union when the banns were called for the first time in Caldbeck Church. She immediately stood up and forbade them, saying, "She's far ower young!" But the undaunted John forthwith appropriated the fair Mary, and set off to Gretna Green on the fleet-footed Binsey. There the pair were married, and on their return the mother had fully relented; thus the function was performed in orthodox fashion in the old church.

All this we learnt and more at Caldbeck, and there is still much of interest to be discovered in the remote old village. Then onwards, and upwards out of the romantic vale we sped, past Greenrigg, where Peel last lived. The storm-stained, grey, old farm-stead stood a short distance from the roadway, and scarcely more than a mile from Caldbeck. It was the first house on the left after passing through the gateway that led on to Uldale Common.

For miles the road stretched ahead, a pale white thread amidst the lonely moorlands, with snow-tipped old Skiddaw gradually heaving his heathery shoulders above the foothills on the left. A branch road in this direction was explored in the hopes of making a way to Skiddaw House, one of the most remarkable topographical curiosities in

the country, and often called "the loneliest dwelling in England." The road soon deteriorated to a track, and finally lost itself and us amongst the heather. Thus the approach to Skiddaw House had to be made from a different direction, of which more later.

Once back on the main road the way was plainly marked. A signpost on the right, marked Bolton Gate, prevented any upward straying towards a forsaken-looking house on the hill-top. On the crest of the moor, nearly 1000 feet above sea-level, there was a momentary glimpse, away and adown, of the Solway Firth and the Scotch mountains, grey and misty in the far distance. Then a long descent, with an awkward gate in the middle of it, led steeply down into Uldale.

Below the church came the steepest descent—a short dip of 1 in $5\frac{1}{3}$ —and in the village the cross-roads required attention. After swerving to the left the way straight ahead was followed, downhill at first, to the awkwardly built bridge with its surprising corner. The plan was to visit Ruthwaite, the real birthplace of John Peel, in 1776.

After crossing the bridge, the hill on the main road towards Castle Inn and Keswick was climbed for nearly a quarter of a mile. Then a turning on the right led into a rough by-road. This was quite a short stretch, and it soon gave access to the main road on the other side of the valley, where a backward turn to the right brought Ruthwaite in sight.



IN JOHN PEEL'S COUNTRY
THE HUNTSMAN'S HOME AT RUTHWAITE NEAR ULDALE

It was here that John Peel lived and hunted for the best part of his time. The reason of his moving so late in life to Caldbeck was given by himself thus: "Folks nivver dee at Ruthet. I'se gaan to Greenrigg to be handy fur t' kirkyard." John Peel passed to the "happy hunting-grounds" in 1854.

After leaving Ruthwaite we followed the main road that comes in from Ireby, straight over the moor to the Castle Inn, on the well-known highway between Keswick and Carlisle. Finally, it might be well to mention that our approach to the Peel country from the east side as described is preferable to that in the reverse direction. It avoids the ascent of some hills of exceptional severity and length.

For the motorist with a trusty car this Peel-land corner of the Lake country is most fascinating, and the second-rate road-surfaces sometimes met with will prevent few paying a second visit. Truly no healthy-minded sportsman or traveller who drinks leisurely of its delights will come away disappointed from that romantic region of mountain and moor, where lived a "grand old English gentleman, one of the olden time."

The fruitless attempt to reach Skiddaw House was not forgotten, and a few days later we set out to solve the problem of the road on the southerly side of the range. There was a local rumour that once a motor had gone through the pass between the masses of Skiddaw and Saddleback and thus reached Caldbeck. Moreover, some of the maps

marked a driving road hereabouts, and the matter had to be settled.

Thus, eastward-bound, we swung up out of the Vale of Derwent and towards the mountains. Filmy clouds lay over the lake below, but, mist-clear aloft rose snow-tipped old Skiddaw, crimsoned with heath and ling and the dying bracken—as much a marvel of colouring as of nobleness of form. Ere long bulky Blencathra, with ridge and rocky rampart black and grey in cloud-shadow, loomed ahead. Farther away, and beyond the lowland levels, the Pennines lay full glorious in the autumn sunlight.

In the village of Threlkeld we turned to the left and northwards, and were soon breasting the steep front of Saddleback. The way led up into the wilds of Skiddaw Forest, the most treeless, most inaccessible, and least-known part of all Lakeland. The deep ravine of the Glenderaterra between the two groups of Skiddaw and Saddleback, or Blencathra, was to be our gateway into the back o' beyond.

Just beyond the Sanatorium it soon became evident that the road was impassable for a motor with four wheels. Persistent attempts to climb that slimy, grassy incline would probably have resulted in a slide over the edge, and an unexpected visit to the open-air patients below.

Thus it was finally decided to leave the car behind, near the last vestige of human habitation, and wander up the rough roadway into the treeless forest. It was soon further evident that at present

no motor-car might venture that impossible and perilous track. Still, a motor-cycle might find a fair-way 'midst the ruts and roughnesses, and for us now on foot the road wound pleasantly around the shoulder of the mountain. We followed it leisurely, now out on the fringe of steeps that dipped to the depths of the Glenderaterra Beck, 600 feet below, now into the recesses of some deep gully in the mountain-side.

"Where the young river gods in maddest play
Come laughing silvery laughter, lightly leaping adown the cliffs."

To geologists this small area is one of the most interesting in the country. First the road cuts across the Skiddaw slates, almost the oldest of known formations. There are fossils in plenty. Half a mile farther northwards the soft slates join a volcanic outcrop, and the tremendous heat has transformed them into one of the hardest rocks known. Strange to say, large boulders glacier-borne from this especial district have been found in many parts of the north country, and as far south as Wolverhampton.

And now, as it were, the road disappeared into the jaws of the pass, and only an indefinite track through a boggy trough led up to the open moorland. Over a wild waste of heather we trudged round Skiddaw's northerly front, not a sign of man's handiwork in sight, nothing but moor and more moor, ending miles away in distant cloud-swathed mountains. Then suddenly a rude fence appeared, and a gate. Beyond this, and high up on the left,

a house peeped out of a clump of storm-shattered larches. It was a scene of utter lonesomeness; the sole evidence of life in the barren wastes was the sudden and startling call of disturbed grouse. It sounded like inhuman laughter at our approach.

Nevertheless, this was Skiddaw House, the loneliest dwelling in England. It is the one and only house in the smallest parish in Great Britain, Skiddaw Forest. Despite its name, with the exception of the few larches around the house, it is a treeless parish. There is no church, no public-house, no post office, nothing but the one valuation, with one ratepayer, who assesses himself to the rates and taxes, and presumably pays them back to himself. The voters' list contains but one name, and, failing the legal church door, it adorns that of the hen-house. The height above the sea is 1650 feet.

Threlkeld, the nearest railway station, is seven miles away, and the last two miles are too hard a problem for wheeled things to solve. The main connexion with the outside world is a poor cart-track which winds over miles of water-logged moorland to the Dash Farm, ten miles from Keswick, the nearest town. This way comes the postman once a week when weather permits.

What happens should illness occur, especially in winter-time, when the place may be cut off from everywhere? This was the question, amongst others, which I asked some years ago, when John Elliott, the then inhabitant of Skiddaw House, came to our rescue—a party of wanderers be-fogged and

be-bogged in his special domain. "Nay," answered the weather-beaten old sportsman, "we nivver ail nought if left to oursels. But, if we do, we just put a guid big havver-meal poultice on our stomachs; that mends ivverything!" This was evidently a new use for oatmeal. "Nay, me lads," answered the old man, with a merry twinkle in his eye, "this mak o' poultice gangs inside, not outside!" Alas! John Elliott and his son have both gone. The latter was stricken with pneumonia at Skiddaw House. He died after being carried down into the lower country—a terrible journey for all concerned.

Our visit to Skiddaw House was not prolonged. There was just time, as the mist lifted, to climb the cranberry-clad recesses above the straggling pasture. There, through a cloudy vista, the westering sun flung long, orange streamers athwart the purple front of Great Calva. For a few moments the dreary wastes wore the colours of fairyland, and far away, the broad plain of the Solway littoral, full of pastoral beauty, burst upon our sight, with the Scotch hills beyond, rose-tinted in the sunset gleam. It was the last splendour. Cloudy gloom filled the Forest and rain showers chased us down the storm-echoing gorge of the Glenderaterra. An hour later we were making for civilization through the murk of a misty twilight, thinking once again what a good friend the motor may be to those who explore even the most inaccessible corners of the Lake country.

CHAPTER XIII

THE HILLS OF LAKELAND

' Only a hill ; earth set a little higher
Above the face of earth ; a larger view
Of little fields and roads : a little nigher
To clouds and silence. What is that to you?
Only a hill, but all of life to me
Up there, between the sunset and the sea."

G. WINTHROP-YOUNG

CAN any healthy-minded man come to Lakeland without coming 'neath the spell of the mountains, without longing to know more of those heights, which, speed he ever so dustily in the valley depths, rise far overhead, silent, supreme, and magnificently heedless of the turmoil of travel? Surely no sound-limbed traveller can fail to feel the appeal. He must get away from the byways and hedges, up amongst the heather and the grey rocks. Long ago the cragsmen heard the call, and nowadays motor-men have tasted somewhat of the joys of summit conquest; they have felt, if only in a small degree, that magic of the hills which will lure men upwards until Everest's frozen dome is conquered.

The enthusiasts of the motor-cycle mode have found ways and means of climbing many remarkable heights, hitherto unknown and unexplored

by anything on tyres. They have shown that gradients approximating to 1 in 2 can be surmounted. Thus the craze for hill-hunting has been developed, and the question, "Which is the worst hill in England?" has been asked. Mindful of recent remarkable ascents and the fearful surfaces overcome, the ultimate answer is undoubtedly Scawfell Pike.

The climb up Skiddaw on a motor-cycle would be quite a possible proposition, and even a light car with specially tyred wheels might succeed. These may seem like freakish suggestions, yet such has been the progress made in modern motor-vehicles of various kinds that doubtless, in due course, these suggestions will become actual facts. Thanks to these improvements, the days of "hill-dodging" are past, and most motor-wanderers set forth towards the mountains, not doubting their power to win through.

And, without question, on the ordinary highways they will be little troubled by the law of gravitation. But on several of the famous, less-crowded Lakeland hills the best of cars and drivers may be tested to the utmost, despite the fact that the gradients may be authoritatively given as 1 in 8. In practice, what the motorist needs is not the average gradient of a mile-long hill, but the actual gradient on the steepest step. This is what he must actually surmount.

The average incline of Red Bank above Grasmere promises nothing formidable, but the middle section of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$ has stayed numberless climbers.

Again, a well-known contour-book, altogether splendid for cyclists, as originally intended, gives Buttermere Hause as 1 in 7 to 8, and many a motorist has mounted gaily up to the 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ stretch. Here painful and even dangerous struggles have ensued, and the poor engine has had all the hard knocks and the blame. Wherefore it behoves one concerned in motor ways in the Lake district to tell of the extreme gradients and the salient features of some of the typical hills, both old and new, which have not been noticed in the ordinary touring scheme.

It has been the writer's good fortune to join in several "hill-hunting" expeditions with motor-cycling friends, and thus the story of a typical day's results may prove useful and interesting.

The ultimate plan was to explore some special hills in the Ullswater district, but a somewhat roundabout approach was chosen. The way at the outset lay under the shadow of Skiddaw to the village of Bassenthwaite. There, after finally discovering that all lanes, roads, paths, and garden-tracks converged beyond the houses at the one bridge over the river, the first object of our quest was found. The hill, which is known as the Rake, was once part of the old road from Keswick to Wigton. It rose unmistakably on the left on the farther side of the bridge.

The first corner proved to be the *bête noire* of the climb; it was awkwardly banked on a gradient of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$. One of the irrepressibles, who dashed unpreparedly on the turn, bit the dust



THROUGH HONISTER PASS ON A STORMY DAY

THE PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN BELOW HILL-STEP, AND AFFORDS SOME IDEA OF THE SURFACE OF THE ROAD. HONISTER CRAG IS CLOUD-HIDDEN HIGH UP ON THE LEFT

and his tongue also during the hurried slide across the grassy bank. Thus remarks were restricted.

However, the start finally yielded to all concerned, and above it the steepness eased off from 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 in 7 at the next turn. For the ensuing half-mile the hill rose at an almost uniform angle of about 1 in 7, and then came a slippery, rocky section, some 22 yards long, with gradients of 1 in 5 and 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. There was still steady climbing for a few hundred yards farther, and in due course an almost level stretch brought us to the junction with the ordinary hill-road that goes from the well-known Castle Inn to Ireby, or Uldale, and through John Peel's country. The long hill which we had just joined is quite a serious problem, with its roughly weathered surface and trying stretch of 1 in 6 and 1 in $5\frac{3}{4}$. Above the junction, ere the summit was gained, there only remained the one short, twisting rise up the Whitefield Hill to attract serious attention. This was mostly 1 in 7, with a short spell of 1 in $6\frac{1}{4}$.

Then, swinging to the right, we sped bumpily down to Uldale, and turned towards the church immediately. But the hill leading thereto was the attraction, and far beyond up to the moors it sprang invitingly. Even the obstructive gate, a third of the length up the climb, was open. To prove that the ways of others besides those of the transgressors are hard, the hardest portion of the hill has to be surmounted by the church-bound villagers. The lower part, nearly 100 yards in length, had a gradient of 1 in $7\frac{1}{2}$ at the beginning,

and gradually rose to 1 in $5\frac{1}{3}$ and 1 in $5\frac{3}{4}$ on the steepest piece. Above the gate there was little relief from steady climbing for nearly half a mile. On the two bends the gradients were 1 in 6, otherwise sections of 1 in 7 and 1 in $7\frac{1}{2}$ predominated.

On the crest of the moor the chill east wind put new life into our heated engines, and on through Caldbeck, Hesket Newmarket, and Mungrisdale we hurried, with scarce time to think of the once glorious days when John Peel ranged thereabouts. A steel-grey mist hid the mountains, and only when Ullswater lay below did the cloud-pall lift and afford a more cheery outlook. After passing through the village of Penruddock we turned off down the fir-sheltered avenues to Hutton John and thence over a little-known, but quite speedy, road to Brackenrigg above the shores of Ullswater. Here a quick descent on the right brought Watermillock in sight, and at the turn on the right, previous thereto, began the approach to Watermillock Hause. The hill had proved a real trial in some recent tests, and its reputed steepness had to be investigated.

There was a fairly continuous upward run to Watermillock Church, just beyond which the real climbing began, with a rise of 1 in 9 to the first corner, which had a gradient of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. The next turn was 1 in 5 on the steepest part, and then 100 yards higher came a sharp turn to the left on an easy slope, which led up to the second stage of the hill. After a 200-yards' approach, with an average grade

of 1 in 6, the rough 50-yards' pitch, which rose above the roofs of a lonely farm-house on the right, checked speed considerably. It was simply a straight 50-yards' rise mostly 1 in 5 and 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$, this latter being the steepest part of the whole hill. About 300 yards higher the 1 in 8 gradient eased off, and soon the gap to the south of Little Mell Fell marked the end of the climb. The road might have been continued on over the breezy moors to Matterdale End, but the descent was made direct to Ullswater.

Some time ago, during the Honister record-breaking days, there had been some talk of a remarkable hill at Howtown; but the eastern shore of Ullswater is such a *terra incognita* to motorists and others that, after numerous inquiries, the rumour had assumed the aspect of a myth. But now was the time to settle the question. It was a wonderful spin along the lake-shore—a perfect road below, and avenues of spring-tinged foliage overhead. Soon we drew up towards the wild recesses of Howtown; the prospect widened. To the right the expanse of wood-fringed waters lay aureate in sunset glow; to the left and straight ahead rose purple mountains, snow-flecked heavenwards, and tipped with rosy light. A zigzag road led up to a confronting gap—this was Howtown Hause. The sight aroused our leader to speed, and when we reached the gate at the foot of the hill he appeared far overhead like a native deer, zigzagging up the height, finally to emerge silhouetted on the skyline.

Our own ascent soon proved that in many ways this was no ordinary hill. A diminutive Stelvio in construction, it reminded us strongly of some of the famous Alpine passes in miniature, though the gradients were here more severe, and the hair-pin bends more hair-raising in the doing. Its difficulties of ascent were to be vividly accentuated. The mountain recesses echoed to the throb of many motors: it was the Carlisle contingent bound for Howtown Hause. One by one, far below, the small black specks burst into view on the open fell-side. Then, barking lustily, they swept savagely at the contending slope. Alas! it was all bark and no bite. It seemed that all were to fail at the first "hair-pin," for gradually the little crowd of vanquished gathered in size. Our leader enjoyed the sight immensely, and with arms wildly waving he shouted, "Why don't you come up?" A chorus of yells was the only answer.

Then at last came one more fortunate than his predecessors. He passed the first bend, and was soon athwart the other difficult corners, with legs steering stragglingly, and machine now roaring noisily, and anon almost silent as each sudden turn was neared. At less than walking speed the successful climber struggled round the final corner and reached our eyrie.

After several attempts, another expert ascended steadily as far as the last corner, but there, to his great disappointment, collapse occurred. One single, soul-satisfying word was spoken. It may have been addressed to the mother sheep on the

fell-side close by ; at least, thus we interpreted it because ladies were present.

There were five peculiarly difficult bends on this new hill at Howtown, the second being probably the easiest, and the fifth the hardest of all. For two-wheelers they were specially trying, but any modern car or three-wheeler would find less serious difficulty in the ascent. After coming through the gate on the open mountain-side, the first turn was approached at once up a grade of 1 in 6. The actual bend was 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$. Then followed a stretch of nearly 100 yards of 1 in 6, until the second somewhat wide corner of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ was passed. The gradient then eased off to an average of 1 in 8 to 1 in 10 up to the third corner, which was deceptive in its sharpness, but possessed of an easier gradient of 1 in $5\frac{3}{4}$. The approach to the fourth corner varied from 1 in 7 to 1 in $8\frac{1}{2}$, and on the turn itself was as steep as 1 in $5\frac{1}{4}$. Beyond this the gradient varied from 1 in 12—only a few yards—to 1 in 8, and at the fifth and last corner was 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$. The finishing straight up to the summit rose for over 100 yards with an average of 1 in 7.

The return to Keswick was made along the shores of Ullswater by moonlight, a scene of indescribable beauty, and peaceful withal after such a stirring day.

On another occasion the hills in the direction of Langdale were explored. Wrynose Pass was the special attraction, because at least one standard map gave it as a good road, and the point had to be settled. On the outward way we crossed Red

Bank, and it may be interesting to note that this splendid test-hill has a steeper grade than either Honister Pass or Kirkstone. The most trying middle section, about 60 yards in total length, started with 1 in 5, gradually rising to 12 yards of 1 in 4, then 12 yards of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$, culminating in an almost equal distance to 1 in $3\frac{2}{3}$. The pitch finished with 1 in 4 to 1 in 5 before the upper long incline was gained. On the topmost steep bit the average grade for 24 yards was 1 in $4\frac{1}{3}$.

The comparatively little hill which rises just north of Skelwith Bridge village, and leads thence up to Loughrigg Tarn and Red Bank, has a great reputation amongst local motorists, and justly so. It is now called Foolstep, and, though scarcely 250 yards in length, has two decidedly difficult and surprising corners of the S variety. The lower part of this section had an average gradient of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ for 24 yards, and just below the upper curve was a 6-yards' step of 1 in $3\frac{1}{3}$, thus actually beating Red Bank.

A new hill above Elterwater village had been described locally as "a stiffer problem than Red Bank." Ullet Nest, as it was called—undoubtedly Owlet Nest in reality—proved to be the old road from Elterwater to Little Langdale and Wrynose, and even yet it is much the shortest route. Were it not situated in a land of plenty, the "Nest" would have great repute as a test-hill. The surface was exceptionally good throughout the whole length of about half a mile ; but, excepting in the lower section, about a third of the way up, the gradient was never

more severe than 1 in 5, and the corners were not troublesome. For 80 yards there was an average gradient of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$, and the steepest bit—8 yards in all—was 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$.

At the top of Ullet Nest a comical old Westmorland dalesman, with countenance to match the pass we sought, gave us much advice and information about Wrynose. His remark, "Honister's naught to Wrynose," almost made us turn homewards. But the statement that no motor machine of any sort had ever climbed or ever could climb Wrynose from this side roused a certain expert's fighting spirit. Yet, to cut a long story short, a motor-cycling companion succeeded in surmounting the 2-mile length of mountain-side-like incline without a single stop.

It may be interesting to mention that from Fell Foot Farm, where the real road ends, there was, first of all, nearly a mile of winding, grassy track, where the slippery turns usually stop would-be climbers. Rocks and boulders now soon covered the road, if such it could be called, and this 300-yards' section, up to a well-built stone bridge, left only the single aspirant for the summit. The average gradient here was 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 in 5. Beyond the bridge there was more "mountaineering" on 50 yards of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$. The final 150 yards proved to be the crux of the climb. There was a mass of loose stones set at an average angle of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$, and about midway there was a fearsome 12-yards' rise of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$.

Standing on the crest of the pass, the views down

the long valleys on either side showed how excellently the road had been designed ; the main thing missing was the surface. At a comparatively small expense this old, neglected road could be made good. It runs through the heart of some of the grandest scenery, and as a west branch road from the Lake district to the sea it is most urgently needed. The run from Ambleside to Seascale at present entails a round of nearly 50 miles ; over Wrynose it would scarcely prove much more than half the distance. At present the road is only fit for records. It is a remarkable experience to motor over the Wrynose and Hard Knott Passes from Langdale to Eskdale. The crossing by car was first made early in June 1913.

Turning to details of a more topographical character concerning some of the most remarkable of Lakeland hills, those on the southerly side of the district may first be mentioned. Kirkstone Pass is undoubtedly the most notable of these ; but this having been dealt with in a previous section, Gummershow may be considered next in interest and importance. It might be mentioned that the correct name of the hill is Gummershow, not, as so often spelt, "Gunnershow," though the latter name seems appropriate enough when motor-cyclists with open exhausts are rushing up the incline.

The beginning of the climb is at Fell Foot on the east shore and quite close to the lower end of Windermere ; the signpost on the right of the main road to Bowness marks it as the way to Kendal. Over Gummershow is still the quickest way to the busy Westmorland town from Newby Bridge.

For the ascent the surface is usually good, but those who continue onwards and over the summit will scarcely approve of the rough, steep descent to Bowlands Bridge in the Winster Valley.

Gummershow rises nearly 550 feet in a mile, and, with the exception of one almost level section, only a few yards in extent, the climbing is continuous. The steepness is felt almost immediately, for there is a gradient of 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$ beginning quite low down in the initial section. But 1 in 6 is the prevailing angle of inclination here, and soon there comes a long rise of 1 in 10 and 1 in 13 before a 1 in 6 ascent is encountered. After a short level or slightly downhill portion, the steepest pitch is soon under wheel. This begins with 1 in 6 and gradually steepens to 1 in $4\frac{2}{3}$, 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$, and then 1 in $4\frac{1}{3}$ ere the easier part (1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in 6) is gained. Now comes a long rise of 1 in 7 and 1 in 8, and higher up, over 300 yards will be found with an average gradient of 1 in $5\frac{3}{4}$. There are several steps of 1 in 5 and 1 in $5\frac{1}{4}$ in this length before the easier 1 in $7\frac{1}{2}$ upper reach is gained. The last rise to the summit, where 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ predominates, has an easy approach. As a view-point from which to see the southerly region of Windermere, the crest of Gummershow is unrivalled; the ascent is well worth while for that alone.

Towtop, which rises up and over the westerly side of the Winster Valley, is a more popular hill, and for motor-cyclists the ascent is much more of a problem than that of Gummershow. The latter is practically devoid of turns, but Towtop is just the

opposite. It abounds in steep corners, where rough surfaces prevail, though it should be mentioned that the loose stones are so rounded and weather-worn that tyres suffer few ill-effects.

There are twelve corners on Towtop, but, after the 1st, only those from the 6th to the 10th are really trying. The 9th is probably the most awkward of all. The steepest gradients on each successive corner are, 1st, 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in 5; 2nd, 1 in $5\frac{1}{4}$; 3rd, 1 in 5; then comes a 100-yard stretch of 1 in 8. On the 4th corner comes 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$; 5th, 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$; 6th, 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$; 7th, 1 in 4 and 1 in $4\frac{1}{4}$; 8th, 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$; 9th, 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$; 10th, 1 in 4; 11th, 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$; 12th, 1 in $4\frac{1}{4}$. Hence there is a very gradual rise to the summit of the hill, beyond which the splendid road to Higher Newton may be followed. There is also an excellent way to the right, which would lead easily back to the Winster Valley at Hodge Hill, passing quite close to Cartmel Fell Church on the way.

There are numerous other fascinating hills in these southerly outskirts of Lakeland which would uplift the motorist to magnificent prospects 'twixt the mountains and the sea. For instance, the wanderer in the Vale of Duddon will notice a thin, grey, ribbon-like roadway winding up the side of the valley almost opposite the Traveller's Rest at Ulpha. This is Kiln Bank Hill. It may be reached by journeying up the dale for about two miles, until the narrow Dunnerdale Bridge allows the river to be crossed. Then, after a sharp turn to the right, the climbing soon begins. The steepest

gradient, a 50-yards' stretch of 1 in 4, is encountered just after emerging from a larch plantation on to the open fell-side. The whole ascent is fully a mile and a half in length, and on the other side there is a comparatively easy descent to Broughton Mills. The crossing of Kiln Bank Hill gives a quick and interesting way from Duddon Vale to Coniston.

Another engrossing hill problem in this district is the Bobbin Mill Hill. This rises over the westerly side of the Duddon Valley, south-west of Ulpha, by a continuation climb up the Old Hall Brow. The rough, grass-grown fell road over to Bootle can thus be gained. The most trying gradients on this climb will be found near the foot of the Bobbin Mill Hill. For over 250 yards there is a steady ascent up a gradient of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 in 4. There is continuous climbing for a mile farther until Old Hall Farm is passed, but no portion is steeper than 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$, and difficult corners form the fascinating feature of upward progress.

There is a wonderfully smooth mountain road rising directly over the moorland heights between Kirby and Ulverston, and the Striber's Hill leading from the Holker Moss over into Cartmel has some interesting gradients of 1 in $4\frac{7}{8}$ and 1 in 5. This latter route also has an excellent surface; it is the way by which the peats are carried over the fells. Those following the beautiful road along the mosses from Flookborough to Haverthwaite may notice it on the right, slanting up amongst the bracken and the rocks.

Then, again, there is a fine mountain road

leading from Satterthwaite and up the Grizedale Valley, whence it mounts over the hills to Hawkshead. Though possessed of easier gradients, it resembles in some ways the almost parallel hill of the Devil's Gallop, which has been described in the run round Rusland and Dale Head Park to Hawkshead.

In the northerly part of Lakeland is the most famous, one might almost say the most notorious, hill in the country. This is Honister Pass. Sufficient warnings have already been given regarding its unsuitability for motor-traffic. Yet the remarkable and adventurous performances thereon have aroused such a widespread interest that some details of the hill are desirable. The making of the new road from Seatoller in Borrowdale, for the use of which a toll of 8d. is charged by the Slate Company, has robbed this easterly side of Honister Pass of its terrors. Yet lovers of the old rough road and big tyre bills sometimes stray up the original route. Only last summer the writer was one of twenty others who helped to push a big, heavy car up the steep, upper step that culminates at the well-known gateway which opens on to the mountain-side. This notorious spot has the steepest gradients of any portion of the old road. For 22 yards there is a rugged rise of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$. Then before the steepness decreases, the 6-yard gradient of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$ proves most trying of all, for the surface is always loose thereabouts.

The lower part of the old Honister Pass road has several steep, little pitches, and one somewhat awkward corner rather less than half-way up the

ascent. Just above this there is a rough gradient of 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$ for 50 yards, and at the very beginning of the climb, just after leaving Seatoller village, there is a corner approached up an incline of 1 in 4 and 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$. The sight of this uninviting start will most probably turn the motorist's attention to the new road, which, it may be mentioned again, is steepest on the first 400 yards; the gradient thereon varies from 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 in 8, with the latter incline predominating.

But it is on the Buttermere side that Honister Pass shows its real terrors. The foot of the *mauvais pas* is reached from Buttermere by Gatesgarth, whence it is $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles to the start of the real climbing. The surface thus far is good. From this point to the summit, 1190 feet above sea-level, the distance is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, and the difference of level is about 550 feet. Steep and rough travelling is encountered immediately the bridge over the mountain torrent is crossed. A wide S turn culminates in 22 yards of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 6 yards of 1 in 4. After an ensuing 100-yard stretch of 1 in 6 there comes a swerve to the right on a rise of 1 in 5, and beyond this the second bridge is approached up an easier portion of 1 in 10.

This affords acceleration for the crux of the climb, which begins quickly with a gradient of 1 in $7\frac{1}{2}$, gradually becoming rougher and steepening to 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ for 22 yards. Now, on an incline of 1 in $4\frac{3}{4}$, there is a left-hand turn to the foot of Hill Step proper, which is gained over about 50 yards of 1 in 5. Hill Step itself is fairly straight,

with a slight swerve to the right in the upper part. The surface still grows rougher, and at the start up the "Step" the gradient of 1 in 4 to 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$ makes the bumpy slipperiness felt unpleasantly. There is a fairly steady climb for 50 yards up the rise of 1 in 4, and then about 22 yards of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$ culminates in 6 yards of 1 in $3\frac{1}{4}$. After 15 yards of 1 in 4 and 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ the rock-exposed, slippery, final stretch is approached. This notorious and dangerous bit is about 20 yards in length and begins with 10 yards of 1 in 4. The middle part has a gradient of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$, and finally the 6-yard rocky portion, inclined at an angle of 1 in 3, has to be surmounted.

The precipitous prospect down into the torrent-filled depths on the right always makes the place interesting. But now the gradient becomes more favourable and the surface loses some of its roughness. The upper part consists of an ascent of about 300 yards up an average gradient of 1 in 6, and just under the summit the last 50 yards steepen again to 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$.

There have been numerous narrow escapes and adventures on this Buttermere side of Honister Pass. The writer has recollections of the early days of motoring, when with three companions he slid down the rough slope, hanging on meanwhile to the back of a sturdy, chain-driven car. It was a day of pouring rain, and the road surface threatened to slide away bodily over into the depths. The back wheels, fortunately solid-tyred, were locked absolutely, and below Hill Step the caravan finished

cross-wise on the road. By dint of much muscle the recovery was completed.

Then on another occasion, with memories of this escapade in mind, different methods were adopted with a light, foreign-built car whose brake-power was only remarkable for its absence. Thus a big, long lump of Honister Crag was tied by a strong rope to the back of the car to act as a trailing brake. Downward progress was begun with an interested lady passenger walking alongside. All went splendidly at first. But suddenly the rope broke, and so tremendous was the strain upon it that it whipped back and savagely enwrapped the flying coils round the lady's legs. Instantly the victim was upset, and amidst a chorus of yells, unheard at first by the driver, she was dragged several yards down the jagged, rocky slope. It was a painful experience, and one which precluded any comfort being enjoyed even on the softest of spring seats.

The ascent of Buttermere Hause, the hill which leads over the mountains from Buttermere village to Newlands Vale, and thence to Keswick, is a much more reasonable undertaking. Moreover, this gives the most direct and beautiful way back to the Vale of Derwentwater. Keswick is only 9 miles distant from Buttermere. The climb begins practically in the latter village. There is a rise of over 700 feet in rather less than a mile and a half, and as an intermediate section of over 300 yards averages almost level, it will be evident that some serious grades have to be tackled.

As a rule the surface is, for a mountain pass, excellent.

In leaving Buttermere village the main road hill, 100 yards long, is as steep as 1 in 5 for some distance below the roadside church. Then the first sharp turn to the left from this incline is somewhat awkward, and there is one other to negotiate ere the intermediate level is reached. On both of these corners 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ is the prevailing gradient.

However, the upper half-mile is the most trying. This is seldom less steep than 1 in 5, and those who take it too speedily may finish athwart the fell-side if the water channels are rushed unskilfully. About half-way up this upper rise there is a 100-yard section of 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$. The steepest and stiffest problem comes on the last turn on a continuous gradient nearly 80 yards in length, and averaging 1 in 4. Bare rock is disclosed under one's wheels on a bit of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$, and in wet weather this may lead to trouble, especially amongst motor-cyclists.

On the descent from Buttermere Hause into Newlands there is a "brant and slape" bit with a gradient of 1 in $3\frac{5}{8}$. This is steeper than anything encountered on the way up from the Buttermere direction; moreover, the "skidded" wheels of the coaches have ploughed up the surface, if it ever had any. Though motor-cyclists can easily find a "fair-way" up the rutted slopes, for cars the ascent is, as previously mentioned, not advisable.

On the westerly side of Lakeland there are few well-known hills, and not many to be recom-

mended. On the highway between the King of Prussia Inn in Eskdale and Santon Bridge there is the most interesting of the many long inclines which are characteristic of the West Trunk Road and its branches in that district. This rises northwards from the Bower House Inn, and is known as Bower House Bank; there are fairly continuous stretches of 1 in 5 during the ascent.

For hill-hunting enthusiasts Eskdale would provide some rough problems with magnificent views from the heathy moorlands overhead. Hard Knott, curly and intricate, is the hardest knot of all to unravel. The road is even rougher and more trying than the Wrynose section, for on Hard Knott the corners add to the difficulty. The hill, which forms part of the pass from Eskdale to Little Langdale or Duddon Valley, is over $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and rises almost 1000 feet in that distance. It has an awkwardly placed gate, and is surfaced alternately with slippery grass and loose stones.

Hard Knott may be conveniently divided into two sections, the upper portion providing much the most difficult problem. In the lower part, about 150 yards above the beginning, the well-known gate is approached up a slippery gradient of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$; bare rocks show here under the grassy covering. Then very severe climbing continues for fully a quarter of a mile, in which distance there are nine difficult corners. The first of these swerves upwards to the left at an angle of 1 in $3\frac{1}{3}$. Several other corners are as steep as 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$. On the approach to the first corner there is a short

rise of 1 in $3\frac{1}{4}$. This is the worst part of the lower section.

Then, after a quarter of a mile of comparatively easy ascent, the desperate final struggle begins where the remains of a wall on the right might, perhaps, prevent a slide back into a black and fearsome-looking gorge below. Four severe corners are encountered immediately, none of them less steep than 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$. No. 3 is of the double variety, and soon after the gradient of 1 in $3\frac{1}{4}$ has been passed there is a loose-surfaced rise 50 yards in length. The gradient here is 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$, with 4 yards of 1 in $2\frac{7}{8}$ a short distance before the fourth corner, 1 in 3, is reached. The ensuing straight stretch is very rough and turfy, but not steeper than 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$, and soon there comes the easy 400 yards' run to the crest of the hill. The average gradient on this portion is about 1 in 6.

Then far below on the other side of the pass the road is seen winding down to Cockley Beck. It never has the steepness of the hill on the Eskdale side, but there are at least ten awkward corners, the steepest of which is 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$. This is almost at the foot of the hill. The upper reaches are rough, but lower down grassy surfaces predominate. The ascent along Wrynose Bottom and up to Wrynose Gap, where stands the Three Shire Stone, is rough, but less steep, except on one troublesome 50 yards' section. The gradient here is 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$; moreover, the surface is exceedingly loose and slippery.

During the author's first crossing of the Hard



CLIMBING HARD-KNOTT PASS FROM ESKDALE

A LUCKY SNAP-SHOT SHOWING THE FIRST CLIMB UP THIS FAMOUS HILL, 1200 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL. THE GRADIENTS FOR NEARLY A QUARTER OF A MILE AVERAGE 1 IN 3 $\frac{1}{2}$; THE CORNERS AND THE SURFACES ARE EXCESSIVELY TRYING

Knott and Wrynose Passes by motor-car in the mid-June of 1913, the ascent up this side to Wrynose Gap proved the most trying section of all. A goodly portion of the surface was flung far and wide on the mountain slopes by the gripless, spinning wheels. Yet the tyre damage here and throughout the whole adventurous crossing was practically inappreciable. Innumerable cars, usually of great horse-power and size, had ineffectually essayed the ascent of Hard Knott from Eskdale and Wrynose from the west, but it remained for a small 10 h.-p. car to show that the excursion is possible. A few days previously, a 20 h.-p. car crossed the passes in the opposite direction, and after experience of both routes, the author considers this crossing from Little Langdale the easier of the two sporting expeditions.

The climb over Cold Fell from near Calder Bridge to Ennerdale Bridge is of quite a different character. Except for some slight roughness on the steepest places and numerous intermittent watercourses, the road is quite good. Moreover, the route possesses the merit of being the shortest way between the two "Bridges." The real ascent begins quite close to the picturesque ruins of Calder Abbey. These are seen amongst the rich foliage during the approach, and are reached after a mile-long, level run from Calder Bridge.

For Cold Fell a steep and narrow road on the left, a few yards short of the entrance gates to the Abbey, is followed for about 50 yards. The steepest gradient here is only 1 in 6. Then of the branching ways now encountered that to the right is

taken. There is a small signpost here, somewhat hidden amongst thick foliage. The gradient does not become any steeper, in fact it never exceeds 1 in 7, but the surface, though never bad, is at its worst until another side-road is noticed. This is about a quarter-mile from the foot of the hill. The left-hand turn is selected here, and ere long the road loses much of its roughness. Then some way beyond a small house, the last for many miles, the open fell-side is gained. The surface still improves considerably and the way is undulating, but continues with an upward tendency until two-thirds of the distance over the fells have been traversed. The highest point is 950 feet above sea-level.

After a mile of descent on the Ennerdale side, the steepness of the downward route increases at once after the gate leading from the fell-side is passed. The gradient here is 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$, increasing to 1 in 5 and 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ on a lower turning. A slightly rougher surface is again in evidence, but only for a short distance, and ere long Ennerdale Water is seen below, blue and beautiful amongst the rugged peaks.

On a fine summer evening the crossing of Cold Fell is altogether delightful. Far above, beyond the crimsoned moorland, the great mountains are afire with the glory of the day's departing; down below, the red sun sinks to rest in its ocean-bed, and all around is the peace and silence of the hills. All lofty life is already at rest, and unheeding of the soft music of the motor's flight. Verily it is good to be up there on Cold Fell, 'twixt the sunset and the sea.

CHAPTER XIV

'TWIXT THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA

"A land of old, upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again ;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea."

TENNYSON

IT is an ideal coast road that carries the traveller southwards from that far northern corner of Cumberland, where the grey waters of the Eden thread through the golden sands into the Solway. From Skinburness almost to Maryport the sea gleams pleasantly by the way, with Scottish Criffel far across the Firth on the right, and Cumbrian Skiddaw away on the left, beyond the nearer gilded wastes of gorse and the more distant, mellow tilth-lands.

Unfortunately, this ten-mile length of coast road is all of its kind that Cumberland can offer the motorist. Certainly, so far as mere surface is concerned, between Maryport and Workington there is small cause for complaint, but there the railway and the busy world of iron and coal cut one off from the sea, and the view mountain-wards is apt to end in "a smut in the eye."

Thus it is well to make the most of the flower-lined levels after leaving Silloth, and on past Allonby, where the new bridge has robbed the ten-mile run of its one real danger-spot. Beyond the latter village in May-time the road passes by the blue-bell hills, which glow miles ahead like an azure cloud. Then comes the rich scent of nearer approach. An old cottage hides under the dune, and beyond it the pink thrift veils the foreshore until the sea-holly carpets the un-tide-swept sands with a soft, grey bloom. Then past green hedges sweet in their spring scents the road swerves away from the sea, and through the leafy avenue that leads into Maryport.

Beyond the almost direct run through the town, Skiddaw sinks on the backward horizon, and on the left Grassmoor looms prominently above the mountains that surround the Valley of Buttermere. Six miles farther the winding streets of Workington will be engaging all attention. The old shore road to Whitehaven, for thither and southwards we are bound, should be avoided, and after finally negotiating the "narrows" and corners by the market, the way lies up the hill-side by the golf-course, with a fine distant seaward prospect. Two miles farther the crest of a gradual rise reveals the grandeur of the Ennerdale heights, with the Pillar Mountain and Herdhouse conspicuous.

The moor road between Cockermouth and Whitehaven is now entered and followed through Distington, where the temptation to "cut" across country to Egremont direct should be avoided. Undulating running soon brings the long half-mile



"TWIXT THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA

WASTWATER LIES DEEP-SET AMONGST ENGLAND'S HIGHEST MOUNTAINS. GREAT GABLE IS THE CENTRAL PEAK, WITH LINGMELL, A BUTTRESS OF SCAWFELL PIKE, ON ITS IMMEDIATE RIGHT, AND KIRK FELL ON THE LEFT. THE SCREES APPEAR IN PROFILE ON THE EXTREME RIGHT

"straight" under wheel which leads up and along the headlands overlooking Harrington, with the sea now close below and full sonorous on a stormy day. Ere long, there comes a fine, downhill glide into Whitehaven with its harbours near by on the right, whilst a glimpse of the lofty workings above the Wellington Pit recalls sad memories of the tragedy in those vast mines under the sea.

The south highway for Egremont turns off to the left up Lowther Street, almost in the centre of Whitehaven, and soon begins to mount steeply past Hensingham. Far across on the right the green headland of St. Bees is noticed, with the road to the village of that name slanting upwards to the south, but always far from acquaintance with the fine cliffs which front the sea. Fleswick Bay, with its curious pebbly beach, affords the grandest sight of the high sandstone escarpments. Motorists would be well advised not to attempt to drive thither by Sandwith and the Lighthouse road, for the best plan is to walk from St. Bees over the grassy uplands above the cliffs.

Six miles from Whitehaven, Egremont and its Castle will doubtless attract attention. The latter stands picturesquely on a green knoll, and when seen from the upward way out of the town has a cheerful aspect despite its Roman name "the Mount of Sorrow." There are numerous romantic traditions connected with the old Castle. In the earlier times it stood clear above the forests that covered this region right up to the slopes of Cold Fell, below which the main road now runs.

The story which the Cumbrians tell of the Castle concerns the Lucy horn which was hung outside the gateway in the Crusading days. Sir Eustace Lucy and his brother Hubert rode forth together to the Holy Wars, the older man saying to his young kinsman, "'If I fall in Palestine do thou return and blow the horn and take possession, that Egremont may not be without a Lucy for its lord.' In Palestine ambition of this lordship so took possession of Hubert that he hired ruffians to drown his brother in the Jordan; and these men assured him that the deed was done. He returned home, and stole into the Castle by night, not daring to sound the horn. But he soon plucked up spirit, and drowned his remorse in revels. One evening, in the midst of a banquet, the horn was heard sounding such a blast that the echoes came back from the fells, after starting the red deer from the covert and the wild boar from his drinking at the river. Hubert knew that none but Eustace could, or would, sound the horn, and he fled by a postern while his brother Eustace entered by the gates. Long after, the wretched Hubert came to ask forgiveness from his brother; and having obtained it, retired to a convent, where he practised penance until he died."

The old Castle lingers long in the backward view during the four-mile run to Calder Bridge, an altogether delightful village hidden in a secluded glen, o'ershaded by giant elms and far-spreading beeches. There, without a sight of the famous Abbey, the right-hand turn over the bridge above

the Calder leads away towards Gosforth. Just before reaching the crest of the long hill that leads down into the village, which may be avoided on the right, there is a wonderful glimpse on the left of our loftiest English mountains crouching round the "den of Wastdale." The great gap of Mickledore between Scawfell and Scawfell Pike shows grandly, but only for a short time. At Gosforth begins that portion of the west trunk road which has led so many motorists astray. Black Combe will doubtless already have been noticed, as yet dim and grey across the sandy stretches of the Esk estuary.

It is inadvisable to attempt short cuts across the tidal roads hereabouts, or over the flanking moors of Black Combe. Holmrook should first be reached, and then Carleton Hall, where after a sharp turn to the left a straight run leads to the bridge over the river Mite and the little Eskdale railway. This bridge is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Gosforth. The way now mounts around the shoulder of Muncaster Fell. At the corner the direct road to Ravenglass is neglected by turning away to the left, and still ascending to a height of over 270 feet above the sandy levels where the Esk, the Irt, and the Mite end their sinuous wanderings. Muncaster Castle on the right is almost entirely hidden by the trees.

The road now dips downward through a wooded avenue, and in a mile and a half approaches the bridge in the valley-bed where the Esk flows seawards.

Less than half a mile before reaching this bridge, and only a few yards apart, there are two

important branching ways on the left. Both belong to Lord Muncaster, and are unmistakably marked "Private Road." However, after converging close by the front of an iron gate, they provide a delightful woodland way into Eskdale, but those who wish to make use of this route must ask permission at the Muncaster Estate Office at Ravenglass. This is well worth the trouble involved, and, whilst close by, it is interesting for those with antiquarian tendencies to visit Walls Castle, near the railway station. It is said to be the best example of a Roman villa in the country.

There is a curious idea in Lakeland that no good roads lead into this beautiful Valley of Eskdale, which lies open to the sea at the one end, whilst the other cuts deep into the southerly backbone of Scawfell, 'midst the wildest confusion of crags and rock-bound torrents that the Lake country can show. However, this popular notion regarding the lack of means of approach is quite wrong.

There is that hilly but wonderful highway which leads from Gosforth and by Santon Bridge, whence it mounts over the fells and finally sweeps down into the valley near Eskdale Green by the Bower House Bank. This is a hill where good brakes add to one's comfort of mind and body. Many a southward-bound traveller, and others also, might care to diverge at Gosforth and run up Eskdale until the mountains encroach upon the roadway with startling suddenness. The surface almost surpasses that of the trunk road until this spot is reached

just beyond a pretty bridge less than a quarter of a mile before reaching the foot of Hard Knott Pass.

The first important feature to note on the way up the dale is the King of Prussia Inn on the right-hand side. For those thus disposed the turn to the right here gives the key to the quicker return by the private Muncaster Road, or the best direct way over Birker Moor into Duddon Dale. Then, continuing the run up the bed of the valley, the "smallest railway in England" follows alongside. The natives call it the "rat-trod," but unfortunately the line is now closed. "Laal Rattie," the last of the two engines, in fact the remains of two in one, and with wooden springs withal, has been trapped by the march of time; her final gasp is over.

It is a great pity that the toy railway can no longer be reckoned amongst the attractions of the district. The juveniles always found great delight in the primitive travel, for the long-suffering driver was never averse to a halt for the gathering of flowers or other mementoes of the visit.

Beyond a large, modern-looking building on the right, once the Stanley Ghyll Hotel and now one of the Holiday Association centres, the village of Boot soon becomes visible on the left, and somewhat away from the main road. The red scars on the mountain-side are the remains of the iron-ore mines; the closing of these is largely responsible for the demise of "Laal Rattie."

About a quarter of a mile before the turning that leads to Boot is reached, a branch road on

the right should not be overlooked. This leads to Stanley Ghyll, or Dalegarth Force, which, with its waterfall deep-set in a larch-fringed glen with towering cliffs on either hand, is perhaps the finest scene of its kind in the north country. Motorists on the way to the fall may turn up this side road, cross a narrow bridge over the Esk, and thus reach Dalegarth Hall, a picturesque and aged structure, where the key for the gateway into the glen may be obtained. The distance to the waterfall is nearly three-quarters of a mile, but the finding of the way and the appreciation of the beautiful approach prevent any dull moments. The "low way" up the glen gives the best idea of its grandeur, but those with time to spare should not fail to climb to the wooded heights above the Ghyll.

Then on the backward walk it may be noted that the rough road which at the outset was partly followed from Dalegarth Hall is one which leads up to Birker Moor and over by the fell road into Duddon Vale and Broughton. Some of the steepest bits of the climb can be inspected on the left just after coming out of the locked gateway. Cars sometimes make the ascent. The genial old Cumbrian at Dalegarth Hall told the writer that "he nobbut ivver saw two ga up! Yan had six folk in't, an' went up weel. But tudder had three in, an' it didn't ga up. It stuck on t' brant an' slape hill nigh th' watterfall yat! It slid back doon th' slape hill, an' Ah nivver saw naught disappear like them folk oot o' that car. They scuttered off like rabbits wid a ferret in ther hole."



A RIVER SCENE IN ESKDALE NEAR STANLEY GHYLL, WITH HARTLEY
CRAGS

An inspection of the hill, especially after wet weather, will reveal its difficulties. Besides the awkward sections referred to above, there is one still steeper rise below the upper gate, which leads out to the open fell-side. In its higher reaches the way is loose and stony, but not of the kind that damages one's tyres seriously.

Some of the grandest rock and river scenery which Eskdale can show will be found near the place where the Stanley Ghyll waters enter the Esk. The purple cliffs of Hartley Craggs are reflected in the indigo depths of great pools, whose rocky walls are lighted with the most golden of mosses and fern-draped in full profusion.

Almost a mile beyond Boot, with its picturesque bridge scene, the Wool Pack Inn is passed on the left. It is a comfortable hostelry and famous as the spot where lost wanderers on Scawfell are welcomed from the wilds. The confusing structure of the mountain masses which slant down to Esk Hause, that loftiest of the passes, is a valuable asset to Eskdale folk, and one of which they are not likely to be robbed, for nowadays it takes more than faith to move mountains. This thought will probably occur to the motorist who, with the peak of Bowfell in front, strays a mile and a quarter farther up the valley and finds himself confronted by the worst mountain coach-road in Lakeland, and probably in all England. It is fully two miles long, and abounds in rough and grassy corners and gradients where 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$ is a common angle of steepness.

Still, it is a fascinating stroll to walk less than

half-way up the pass to the ruined structures known as "Hard Knott Castle." These, as regards situation, are doubtless the most romantic Roman remains in the country. It is a weird experience to lie on that lofty terrace amongst the rich fell grass, and gaze round on the same grim mountains which nearly two thousand years ago looked down on a different scene. Instead of the straight way of the Romans, the road now winds up to the gap between the shapely peak of Hard Knott and the rugged crest of Harter Fell on the right. The latter mass springs overpoweringly above all that outlasts the fierce storms which so often shriek through the narrow gap.

At the northerly or upper side of the great fort, whose ruined walls form a rough square nearly 200 yards across, the look-out tower still dominates the smaller forts that were placed at intervals around the stronghold. From this vantage-point Scawfell's turmoil of crags, and untamed wastes of heather and sedge land are seen magnificently. Then far below, and winding to the blue line of the sea, lies the full length of Eskdale, brightly verdured in contrast with the bare lofty solitudes, which even the Romans found difficult to dwell amidst in comfort. This is indicated by the recent excavations on the south side of the main camp and close by the present roadway. There are to be seen the remains of a four-roomed house with a bathroom. The place was probably an inn with a most elaborate system of hypocausts, or, in other words, a series of passages in the walls by which

the hot air was circulated from a furnace placed at a lower level.

There is also a remarkable circular structure next door, as we moderns say, which some aver has been a temple, or shrine. The doorway is notably narrow, and a healthy, modern motorist, if full-coated, would have difficulty in effecting an entrance. Such an one will scarcely care to wander up the steep final mile to the top of Hard Knott Pass, but, should he do so, a glorious scene is disclosed of the Wrynose Pass, with Pike o' Blisco on the left and Wetherlam on the right. Close underneath, the road disappears over the rocky scarp into the depths of Duddon Dale. The tiny, white, tree-girt house at Cockley Beck adds a touch of life to the grey solitudes, where stillness reigns except for the croak of the ravens and the distant barking of the fell foxes.

But perchance the motorist who is southward bound along the trunk road will think this divergence into Eskdale has lasted long enough. Thus he will turn his face westwards in the direction of the ruddy sands of Ravenglass, as did the Romans of long ago when they made those curious bricks which bulk so largely in their Hard Knott handiwork. There may scarcely be time to visit the ancient farm of Brothelkeld—Butterilket on the Ordnance maps—which stands near the foot of the pass.

The farm-folk here tell a romantic story concerning a family name now well known in the north. One stormy winter's evening, over a hundred years

ago, the shepherds were returning from the fells, and near the bridge over the river at the foot of Hard Knott Pass a curious noise attracted their attention. In the lulls of the storm which swept through the leafless larches they heard what proved to be the cries of an infant. In that utterly lonesome spot, amongst the bare rocks, and sparsely clothed, they found a small baby boy only a few weeks old. The child could scarcely have survived such exposure an hour longer. The kindly shepherds took and nurtured the foundling as one of their own, but no traces of the parents were ever discovered. Now and again some of the numerous descendants of the "mountain child" stray up into this romantic region, and doubtless wonder by what small chance "they inherit the earth."

In the return to the coast road from Hard Knott and Eskdale the motorist should carefully avoid the tempting-looking turn to the left at the King of Prussia Inn, unless, of course, he have permission to go by the private drive through Muncaster Park. The ordinary road down this southerly side of Eskdale is extremely rough, narrow, and hilly. Neither is the side road which branches off to the left at Bower House Inn advisable.

The better plan is to journey upwards and onwards almost to Santon Bridge, and thence turn off to the left. Once on the main western highway this is followed as before described around the westerly shoulder of Muncaster Fell, whence ere long the steep hill leads down to the levels near the bridge over the river Esk. Soon the end of the road

which follows down the south side of Eskdale will be passed. From this end a glance at its structure will be enough.

And now the main road swerves away to the right, and a mile of splendid running brings Woodside Brow within sight. This is the only serious hill on the coast route, but one which even in recent motoring days has earned the district much disrepute. At such times a serious mistake was, and is yet, very frequently made by mounting straight ahead up the hill and over to Duddon Bridge near Broughton-in-Furness direct. The beginning of the Brow lies round a sharp, cottage-hidden corner on the left, and a gradient of 1 in $5\frac{1}{2}$ occupies immediate attention. Then with steep inclines of 1 in 6 and 1 in 7 there is a 200-yard rise to the second corner, which bends sharply to the right. On the turn itself the gradient is 1 in $4\frac{7}{8}$. The broad, inviting-looking road straight ahead is the one to be avoided. The up-to-date signpost wisely marks it as "unfit for motor traffic," but also gives Broughton as only 10 miles away.

The main road hill—on the right—still mounts steadily for over 100 yards, but, except in the upper part, the gradient is not more severe than 1 in 8. The last rise, about 20 yards in length, is as steep as 1 in 5.

High speeds are scarcely yet advisable, for soon there comes a trying descent ending in a sharp turn to the left. Now Black Combe looms grandly in front, and, be it early summer-time, the 4-mile run to Bootle will be lightened by the most wonderful roadside banks of primroses, violets, and blue-

bells that ever any Lakeland road-wanderer might wish to see.

Beyond Bootle, where the direct fell-road to Duddon Bridge and Broughton-in-Furness should be avoided, the surface of the highway improves. Then, far on under the craggy front of Black Combe the miles fly swiftly past. But an important, unmarked turning on the left at Whicham, just before reaching Silecroft, should not be missed. This shortens the route. It also enables one to avoid Millom, and enjoy splendid mountain scenery instead of chimney-stack and ironwork prospects. This turning lies at the foot of a considerable hill at the southerly end of Black Combe and just beyond the John Bull Inn, on the right-hand side of the road.

From Whicham to Hallthwaites, Black and White Combe show an ever-changing frontage. It is mostly on these extensive grassy uplands that the sheep grow the wool which the farmers bring into the latter village to be treated by the old-fashioned hand-weaving method. Even to-day the industry flourishes exceedingly. At Hallthwaites the main road is again joined, and for awhile it tends uphill to a height of over 320 feet above the sea. Ere the mile-long descent to Duddon Bridge begins, the lofty outlook over the estuary to Walney, and Barrow's clustering chimneys must not be missed; it is one of the finest distant scenes that the coast-road can show.

After mounting from the Duddon Valley over the hill whereon stands Broughton, the best main road route runs through Grizebeck and

Lowick Green to Greenodd. It may be mentioned at this juncture that Greenodd is an important town for all motorists who wish to include a visit to Furness Abbey in their Lakeland programme. Most of the best routes converge near here and approach the Abbey, rather more than 13 miles away, through Ulverston, Lindal, and Dalton. Most of the journey after passing Ulverston is somewhat hilly, and following a slight descent from Dalton the Abbey Road mounts considerably, to drop finally and steeply into the little, tree-girt glen of Beckans Ghyll. Here the old ruins lie snugly ensconced next door to a flourishing, first-class hotel, which shows that modern sojourners in that lovely spot are not unappreciative of the comforts which the old monks loved so well.

The return journey as far as Ulverston may be made by a different and a much prettier as well as more interesting route. This is by Stainton and Scales to Baycliff where the wide expanse of Morecambe Bay soon lies outspread. Now begins a far too short stretch of beautiful coast road to Bardsea, near which the view across the "majestic plain where the sea has retired" is at its best. Conishead Priory is passed ere the road drops gradually to Dragley Beck, and thence on to Ulverston.

The southward-bound motorist, who has not made the detour towards Furness Abbey, will turn off sharply to the left, just before entering the main village of Greenodd. Then, on the speed-way over the mosses, he may consider the choice of the two routes which divide at Haverthwaite.

One of these turns to the right, and after crossing the river Leven passes by Low Wood, keeping to the right of the village and making for Cark along the Holker Mosses. It is a splendid road thus, and the rich glow of colour 'midst the lush growth of birchlets, bog myrtle, and heather is most impressive, especially if Coniston Old Man rises, cloud-clear and purple, beyond the haze of the hidden estuary. These mosses are always beautiful—in spring-time when the white clouds of hawthorn stretch afar above the silvery carpet which the lilies of the valley have woven, or in winter when the amber shadows lie amongst the grasses, and the dead bracken and sedges have mantled the land in russet and gold.

From Cark, near which the old Cartmel Priory Church nestles in the quiet vale, the way leads through ancient Flookborough. In the quaint old town the fluke is still man's chief mission in life, and oftentimes in death also, for those shifting sands are treacherous as of yore. Lindale is finally reached through Allithwaite—where a sharp left- and then right-hand turn is preferable to the steep direct way—and Grange-over-Sands.

But the quickest and shortest route lies from Haverthwaite by Newby Bridge and thence over the hills through Higher Newton to Lindale. From the crest of the last long descent the grey mountains send a final farewell across the deep valleys where the hidden lakes lie silent and still. Then away beyond the levels of Lyth the great highway is joined with its speeding throng.

The magical land of hills is soon no more than a sapphire line low down on the horizon. Vision fails at last, but lifelong memories of those lofty peaks and gleaming waters remain to cheer the workaday toil of many a distant wanderer. Again and again that abode of mountain peace calls across miles and miles of dusty highway to the lover of the land where all is fair, and where the joys of the open air are full glorious, and all absorbing.

Truly favoured is the man whose car awaits his bidding for the flight.

SUMMARY OF ROUTES AND DISTANCES

CHAPTER II

A SPRING-TIME WAY INTO LAKELAND—THE OTHER APPROACHES

LANCASTER to—	Miles	LANCASTER to—	Miles
Carnforth . . .	$6\frac{1}{2}$	Winster (by foot of	
Milnthorpe . . .	$13\frac{3}{4}$	Towtop) . . .	32
Levens Bridge . . .	$16\frac{1}{8}$	Bowness on Winder-	
Derby Arms . . .	$21\frac{1}{8}$	mere . . .	35

DISTANCES FROM SOME IMPORTANT TOWNS TO KENDAL AND KESWICK

- Birmingham to Kendal, 158 miles.
 Bradford to Kendal, 66 miles (by Skipton).
 Carlisle to Kendal, 44 miles.
 Hawes to Kendal, 26 miles (by Sedbergh).
 Liverpool to Kendal, 73 miles.
 Leeds (190 miles from London by G. N. Road) to Kendal, $72\frac{1}{2}$ miles
 (by Skipton, Settle, and Kirby Lonsdale).
 London (through Coventry, Lichfield, Warrington, and Preston) to
 Kendal, 256 miles.
 Manchester to Kendal, 72 miles.
 Preston to Kendal, 42 miles (by Levens).
 Preston to Kendal, 43 miles (by Burton in Lonsdale).
 Skipton to Kendal, 46 miles.
 Barnard Castle to Keswick, 57 miles.
 Edinburgh to Keswick, 126 miles.
 Glasgow to Keswick, 136 miles.
 Newcastle-on-Tyne to Keswick, 80 miles (by Alston and Penrith).
 Newcastle-on-Tyne to Keswick, 90 miles (by Carlisle and Bothel).

CHAPTERS III AND IV

THE MAIN TRUNK ROAD

KENDAL to—	Miles	KENDAL to—	Miles
Staveley.	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	Thirlspot (east side of	
Windermere Village	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	Thirlmere).	24
Ambleside	13 $\frac{1}{4}$	Keswick.	30
Grasmere Village	17 $\frac{1}{2}$	Castle Inn	38
Dunmail Raise	20	Bothel	42
End of New West Road,		Carlisle	61
Thirlmere	21		

CHAPTER V

ROUND WINDERMERE AND CONISTON WATER

AMBLESIDE to—	Miles	AMBLESIDE to—	Miles
High Wray	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	High Nibthwaite (end of	
Ferry Hotel	6 $\frac{3}{4}$	Coniston)	33 $\frac{1}{2}$
Newby Bridge	13 $\frac{3}{4}$	Greenodd	39
Rusland	18	Newby Bridge	44
Hawkshead	25	Bowness	51
High Cross	26 $\frac{3}{4}$	Ambleside	56 $\frac{3}{4}$

CHAPTER VI

WANDERINGS IN THE LANGDALES—TO CONISTON AND THE VALE OF DUDDON

AMBLESIDE to—	Miles	AMBLESIDE to—	Miles
Dungeon Ghyll New		Duddon Bridge	34
Hotel (by Lough-		Ulpha	38
rigg Tarn and High		Seathwaite	41
Close).	9	Farm-house in Eskdale	
Elterwater Village.	12	before reaching King	
Fell Foot (Little Lang-		of Prussia Inn (after re-	
dale)	16	turning almost to Ulpha) 51	
Oxenfell (junction with		Eskbridge (by the Mun-	
Ambleside to Coniston		caster Private Road) . . .	56
Road).	20	Bootle	62
Coniston	24	Broughton (by Whicham) . .	74
Broughton (High Cross		Ambleside (by Coniston	
Inn)	33	and Oxenfell)	91

CHAPTER VII

KIRKSTONE PASS, ULLSWATER, KESWICK

AMBLESIDE to—	Miles	AMBLESIDE to—	Miles
Kirkstone Inn from Low		Ullswater Hotel, Glen-	
Wood by Troutbeck	$7\frac{3}{4}$	ridding (Pooley Bridge	
by Direct Route. . .	$2\frac{7}{8}$	is $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles away) .	15
by Cook's Corner and		Troutbeck Railway Sta-	
Troutbeck . . .	$10\frac{1}{4}$	tion (Cumberland) .	$22\frac{1}{2}$
by Troutbeck Bridge .	$9\frac{1}{2}$	Threlkeld . . .	$27\frac{1}{2}$
Brotherswater Inn . .	$9\frac{1}{2}$	Keswick. . . .	$31\frac{1}{2}$
Patterdale	14	Grasmere	$43\frac{1}{2}$
		Ambleside	$47\frac{3}{4}$

CHAPTER VIII

IN AND AROUND THE VALE OF DERWENTWATER

KESWICK to—	Miles		Miles
Lodore	3	Return to Braithwaite .	28
Rosthwaite	6	Peel Wyke (foot of	
Seathwaite	9	Bassenthwaite Lake) .	34
Grange (return) . .	14	Castle Inn	36
Foot of Buttermere		Keswick.	44
Hause (by Newlands			
Vale)	21		

CHAPTER IX

EASTERN LAKE LAND—HAWESWATER AND ULLSWATER

KESWICK to—	Miles		Miles
Troutbeck	9	Return to Askham . . .	$43\frac{1}{2}$
Penrith (by Greystoke)		Pooley Bridge (by Cel-	
(Round from Penrith to		leron)	47
Long Meg and Nunnery		Patterdale	$56\frac{1}{2}$
Walks, 29 miles extra)	$18\frac{1}{2}$	Kirkstone Inn . . .	$62\frac{3}{4}$
Eamont Bridge . . .	$19\frac{1}{2}$	Ambleside (by Trout-	
Askham.	$23\frac{1}{2}$	beck Village and Low	
Bampton	$27\frac{1}{4}$	Wood)	$70\frac{3}{4}$
Mardale Green . . .	$33\frac{1}{2}$	Keswick.	$87\frac{1}{2}$

CHAPTER X

THE WESTERN LAKES

KESWICK to—	Miles	KESWICK to—	Miles
Whinlatter Pass (summit)	5	Ennerdale Bridge . . .	32 $\frac{3}{4}$
Signpost where road branches for Butter- mere and Scale Hill .	10	Cleator	37 $\frac{1}{4}$
Buttermere Village .	14	Calder Bridge (through Egremont)	42 $\frac{3}{4}$
Return to Lanthwaite Farm and thence to Scale Hill	18	Gosforth	44 $\frac{3}{4}$
Lamplugh	24	Strands	48 $\frac{3}{4}$
Mireside (Ennerdale) .	29	Wastdale Head . . .	54 $\frac{3}{4}$
Angler's Inn (by returning through Crossdale) .	31	Return to Gosforth . .	64 $\frac{3}{4}$
		Egremont	70 $\frac{3}{4}$
		Embleton (by Frizington and Lamplugh Cross)	90
		Keswick	100

CHAPTER XII

AN AUTUMN RUN THROUGH JOHN PEEL'S COUNTRY

KESWICK to—	Miles	KESWICK to—	Miles
Threlkeld	4	Caldbeck	17 $\frac{1}{2}$
Turning from main road to Mungrisdale	8	Uldale	23
Mungrisdale	10	Ruthwaite	24 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bowscale	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	Castle Inn	28 $\frac{1}{2}$
Hesket Newmarket .	16 $\frac{1}{4}$	Keswick	36 $\frac{1}{2}$

CHAPTER XIV

'TWIXT THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA

SILLOTH to—	Miles	SILLOTH to—	Miles
Maryport	13	Broughton (by Whicham)	64
Workington	19	Lowick Green	71
Whitehaven	27	Greenodd	74
Egremont	33	Newby Bridge	79
Gosforth	39	Lindale	84 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bootle	52	Levens Bridge	91

SOME OTHER CIRCULAR ROUTES ON THE
OUTSKIRTS OF LAKELAND

KESWICK TO ALLONBY, RETURNING BY SILLOTH

KESWICK to—	Miles	KESWICK to—	Miles
Peel Wyke	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	Tarns	37 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cockermouth	13	West Newton	40 $\frac{1}{4}$
Goat's Brow (steepest gradient, 1 in 7)	13 $\frac{3}{4}$	Aspatria	42
Maryport via Dearham	20 $\frac{1}{4}$	Threapland (by Arkleby)	44
Allonby	25 $\frac{1}{4}$	Bothel	46 $\frac{1}{4}$
Silloth Railway Station	33	Castle Inn	50 $\frac{1}{4}$
Return to branching of roads leading to Tarns	34	Keswick	58 $\frac{1}{4}$

From Aspatria to Bothel through Brayton Park is about 2 miles longer. There is a good road from Allonby to Keswick through West Newton and Aspatria, also a slightly inferior one through Hayton, and another, usually still less suitably surfaced, through Bull Gill, Tallentire, and Cockermouth.

KESWICK TO ST. BEES, RETURNING THROUGH EGREMONT,
ENNERDALE BRIDGE, SCALE HILL, AND WHINLATTER PASS

KESWICK to—	Miles	KESWICK to—	Miles
Cockermouth	13	Ennerdale Bridge (by Wath)	41 $\frac{1}{2}$
Distington	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	Lamplugh	45
Whitehaven	27 $\frac{1}{4}$	Scale Hill	50 $\frac{3}{4}$
St. Bees (Sea Cote Hotel)	32	Keswick (by High Lorton and Whinlatter Pass)	61
Egremont	35 $\frac{1}{2}$		

KESWICK TO SEASCALE, RETURNING ROUND BLACK
COMBE AND BY CONISTON

KESWICK to—	Miles	KESWICK to—	Miles
Embleton	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	Bootle	53
Paddle School (by cross- road)	15	Broughton (by Whicham and Hallthwaites, avoiding Millom)	64
Egremont (by Frizington)	30	Coniston	73
Gosforth	36	Ambleside (over Oxen- fell)	81
Seascale	39	Keswick	97 $\frac{3}{4}$
Holmrook (through Drigg)	42 $\frac{1}{2}$		
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